

CLERICAL INTRIGUE

AND

COUNTER PLOT:

A HUMOROUS ROMANCE,

WITH

MORE TRUTH THAN FICTION.

BY

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WITH NUMEROUS CHARACTERISTIC ILLUSTRATIONS.

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Dedicated
TO
JAMES MORRISON, ESQUIRE,
MEMBER OF
THE FACULTY OF PROCURATORS, GLASGOW,
IN RECOGNITION OF
EARLY PROFESSIONAL KINDNESS,
AND
AS A SOUVENIR OF
Some Hard Struggles
IN
THE CHURCH COURTS.

P R E F A C E.

THAT learned and witty Spaniard, Balthazar Gracian, has laid down in his amusing book, *El Oraculo Manuel y Arte de Prudencia*, published upwards of two hundred years ago, the maxim—“Never give satisfaction to those who demand none.” He thinks that to afford too much in the way of explanation to those who do not expect any, is decidedly foolish; and that to make an excuse before its time is tantamount to self-accusation—a premature apology being, in his opinion, calculated, besides, to awaken hostility that might otherwise have slept. There is a good deal of truth in the apothegm of the worthy old Don. If it had been universally acted upon, a few good Prefaces would doubtless have been lost to the world; but, on the other hand, people would have been saved the trouble of reading through a great many bad ones, and the necessity, in many cases,

of inverting the pathetic language of Job, by exclaiming, “Oh! that they were *not* printed in a book.” While, however, we do not suppose that the public will care much about the origin or intention of the following chapters, it may not be amiss to say something by way of explanation, keeping carefully in view the advice of the venerable Balthazar.

Any one who takes the trouble of noting what are called the signs of the times, must be struck with the fact that Society—social, political, and religious, in these realms, is undergoing a rapid, although silent and almost imperceptible, change. Who would have predicted, some sixty or seventy years ago, the wondrous results of practical science in our time—the era of the steam engine and the electric telegraph? What artizan of those days of close boroughs and trade monopolies would have dreamt that they should be all swept away, and that he himself would be entitled to vote for a Member of Parliament—perhaps to sit in the House of Commons itself, instead of being represented by the everlasting “Bailie” of his native town? Who, except some prophetic individual of the Dr Cuming school, would have imagined that in Italy and Spain the Papacy would lose its authority—that sturdy monks would have to leave ancient

monasteries “void, redd, and patent,” and that, as the Romish Faith, its institutions and ceremonies, were in course of being uprooted from Italian and Spanish soil, they should be spreading over the length and breadth of Protestant England ; while the Irish Church would be blotted out of existence to soothe the clamours of emancipated Romanists ? But above all, who would have been bold enough to say that in Calvinistic Scotland the authority of the Decalogue would be scouted even in the pulpit of the “Auld Kirk” itself, and that the odious “kist o’ whussels” should again make its appearance within its sacred walls ?

Whether the Church ought to remain stationary, or should progress in the matter of doctrine and ritual—whether psalms should be sung standing or sitting, or prayers be listened to in a kneeling or in an upright posture, we do not pretend to say. The Church of Scotland may or may not be behind the age in these and in other things of equal importance ; but there is one matter at least, and that of a very vital description, in which she is not merely behind the age, but with regard to which she stands alone—to wit, in her ecclesiastical law and procedure. The object of the following chapters is to show the working of this system, by tracing a case of dis-

puted settlement, from its germination in the cabals of a certain class of objectors, to its commencement in the Presbytery, and final disposal by the General Assembly; to bring the reader, so to speak, behind the scenes, and to lay bare the motives and intentions which, in many instances, influence the various actors in this clerical drama. The scenes and characters are not all fictitious. Some of the *dramatis personæ* are still living. While what is written is, to a certain extent, in the form of burlesque, it would not be possible to write a more complete travesty upon judicial procedure than what is recorded in many of the printed cases which have come before the Assembly. Objections of the most ridiculous character, got up, perhaps, by a few malignant and interested men, are attempted to be supported by evidence of such astounding absurdity, eagerly listened to and willingly accepted by Church Courts, that a century or so hence, when the world, let us hope, will be wiser and better than it is now, the antiquarian who disentombs some of these cases will stand aghast at the ignorance, hypocrisy, and caddishness which they almost universally display. It is to be hoped that long ere that time arrives, Ecclesiastical Courts, as now constituted and worked, may be things of the past—that men of learning and

piety, on entering the Church as its ministers, may no longer be exposed to vexatious and frequently malicious opposition, involving them in long months of tormenting anxiety, and in expenses which, even when they are successful, it may take the savings of a lifetime to defray ; and that the people may not be compelled to vindicate conscientious objections to an unsuitable minister through the medium of a keen and protracted litigation.

The direct cause of this state of matters is undoubtedly the law of patronage as exemplified in the practical working of Lord Aberdeen's Act, a measure which constitutes the right to object to a presentee, and regulates the form of procedure to be followed out, supplemented by various Acts of Assembly ; but in the following pages its working and effects, in the case of a disputed settlement, have been displayed in a favourable light, for they show only the cabal of a few interested individuals, successful for a time, while in the end, the people were triumphant ; but, alas ! this is not always the result. Many cases have occurred where a cabal was successful, and the people were defeated. Patronage is a baleful and hydra-headed monster. Who will arise and help us to slay him ?

A state of matters such as that which now exists is injurious and demoralizing to all parties—to the people, the presentee, and the Church itself—and urgently calls for reformation. The magnitude of the task to be undertaken seems to frighten those whose duty it is to set about it. They are afraid to begin the work, although fully satisfied as to its necessity. Julius Cæsar was wont to say that great exploits should be engaged in without deliberation, lest a contemplation of the danger might damp the ardour necessary to carry out the enterprise. It would in the present case, at all events, be a lesser evil to venture upon the work without further consideration, than to be perpetually talking about the difficulty of accomplishing it. The quaint old author to whom we have already referred, furnishes us with a maxim which might sometimes perhaps be followed with advantage. He recommends that “what is easy ought to be entered upon as if it were difficult, and what is difficult as if it were easy; the one for fear of slackening through too much confidence, the other for fear of losing courage through too much apprehension.” Why not approach the matter of Ecclesiastical Reform firmly and boldly, and be done with a system which, it is not too much to

say, is a blot upon our civilization, and a disgrace to Christianity?

There are some evils which can only be successfully attacked when they are thoroughly ridiculed, and the present is one of them. How much did the cause of the Reformation owe to the colloquies of Erasmus? Perhaps as much as to the fulminations of Luther. We know how keenly their pungent satire was felt by the Romish priesthood from the virulent attacks which they made upon the author. While we do not anticipate that anything that might be written against what, by a perversity of language, is called "church *settlements*," could call forth similar attacks in our day, yet, should it do so, it would be well for irate presbyters to remember the reply of Erasmus to the Romish Churchmen. "*Theologi*," says he, "*queruntur se a nobis traduci, qui studia ipsorum tantis vigiliis adjuvamus, quum ipsi volentes, amplectantur talia monstra, quae plus dedecoris adferunt ordini Theologorum, quam quivis quamlibet maledicus hostis posset;*" which may be Englished thus:—"The clergy complain that they are traduced by me, who have assisted them by so many labours, while they themselves practise such monstrous things as bring more disgrace upon their order than the most malicious enemy could inflict."

The system, in short, is radically rotten and indefensible, and must eventually be swept away. If the "Outs and Ins of the Veto Case" shall have any effect in showing the necessity for an immediate and thorough Reform, they will have accomplished a very necessary and desirable end.

HYNDFORD PLACE, GOVAN ROAD,
GLASGOW, 17th March, 1869.

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LOVE, LAW, AND THEOLOGY.

CHAPTER I.

SKECH OF THE PARISH OF VETO, IN THE PRESBYTERY OF DUNDERHEAD—ITS PECULIAR ATTRACTIONS FOR A “YOUNG, VIGOROUS, AND ENERGETIC MINISTER,” AND THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PARISH FOR SUCH A PASTOR—APPOINTMENT OF A PRESENTEE—HIS *TRIAL* DISCOURSES.

THE Parish of VETO, in the West of Scotland, contains some three thousand inhabitants. Most of them are engaged in field labour, some are occupiers of small crofts, while many are located in the coast villages. The parish marches with the broad Atlantic. Its old, cold, and barn-like church stands close to the rocky shore of that stormy sea. Often does the quietness of the Sabbath morn appear to be doubly still by the deep and mournful sound of the billows, rolling almost, but not quite, up to the old foundations of the House of God—seeming, as they retire, to bow to the sacred edifice, and to say, “Thus far only may we go, yet we love to join our ocean bass, to the human voices which rise in song

to the God of man and nature." Round the church straggles a little kirk-yard, surrounded by a dilapidated dyke of rude stones, and mottled here and there by hillocks covered with rank and attenuated grass. Here

"The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

These hillocks are sheltered from the open blast of the ocean, and when elsewhere all is gust and fury, here, at least, the winds respect the dead—they enter only to mourn.

The church and manse are surrounded by meadows, sheep fanks, and distilleries. Black cattle crop the herbage upon the surrounding hills—a place, surely, where a parson with rural tastes might add considerably to his stipend if on good terms with his neighbours! It was unquestionably a highly desirable parish for an unmarried man, there being several eligible young ladies connected with its bucolic and alcoholic aristocracy—and it was now vacant. The Rev. Torquil M'Corkscrew, its pastor, had lately been gathered to his fathers. He had long and faithfully filled the rude pulpit of the homely kirk, and comfortably occupied the old manse, with its unfenced though productive glebe, and neglected but fruit-bearing orchard. Like a sensible man, he had married early in life into one of the families, most likely

to further the interests of an ecclesiastic with cattle-breeding proclivities, and his disconsolate relict now hoped to retain possession of the manse and glebe until a new minister was inducted.

The marriageable young ladies and their male relatives, naturally wished that a presentation should be given to one likely to follow the example of the departed M'Corkscrew. It was thus, probably, that it was discovered that the wants of the parish required the services of a "young, vigorous, and energetic minister." To further so desirable an object, a reverend gentleman, who possessed much influence with Royalty, was asked to do what he could to procure a presentation for a certain "Dowb" who would have fulfilled all the conditions necessary, in the eyes at least of a few persons, who considered that they had the best interests of the parish at heart.

Unfortunately for the wishes of the amiable family coterie, the Lord Advocate, who exercises the privilege of disposing of Crown presentations to vacant benefices, did not entertain the idea that this section of the parishioners should have their choice of a pastor. Perhaps he did not see the necessity for their having a gentleman with merely the limited qualifications indicated. At any rate, he gave the presentation to one, who, although not juvenile, was vigorous and energetic. Unhappily, however, he laboured

under the incurable disqualification of being a married man.

The consternation with which this news was received by the parties who thought that they had secured the ministerial succession to the defunct M'Corkscrew, may be easily imagined. Visions of flitting from the mansc^e, of young storks no longer browsing upon ecclesiastical grass, and sheep driven to other than church folds, passed before their eyes, and they determined, with frowning brows, that, if possible, this thing should not be. They knew that opposition to presentees had been successful where family interests were the real, although, of course, not the ostensible cause of dissent. What was to hinder the aristocratic cattle feeders and their friends from influencing the members of the congregation, most of whom were their own dependents, to oppose a presentee? True, the day was gone by when a certain law of the church gave power to male heads of families to reject a man without any reason assigned, and objections would now require to be stated and proved against the presentee, but then they knew that objections were thick as leaves in Vallambrosa, and that in many cases presbyteries were neither over particular in determining their relevancy nor scrupulous in finding them proved. They were fully aware, also, that they could command all but a mere fraction

of the Presbytery of Dunderhead. The diminutive, long-nosed, oily-faced incumbent of a neighbouring parish—the recognised leader of that remarkable church court—had been tutor in one of their families, and through its influence had obtained his living. Besides, the members of Presbytery had often lived at heck and manger in their houses with the jovial hospitality of the good old times, when the boisterous ferries of Hebridean Isles refused to become placable, notwithstanding, it is to be hoped, the earnest prayers of belated guests for moderate weather. There were few of them, moreover, who had not often been driven scot-free in comfortable dog-carts to the very doors of their distant manses. And, then, would not the Assembly (not to speak of the Synod) decide for the objectors, even as the said little oily man had often remarked, because it would be *magis bono ecclesie* that a presentee who was opposed, should be rejected, than that he should be inducted in the face of a reclaiming congregation ? Had not the REV. TRYER MUSSELL been cast because one of his trial discourses was discovered by a distinguished divine, in a certain seaport town celebrated for rain, to be copied from a book of old sermons, and *tottied* out of existence with a broken heart in consequence ; while a second presentee was kept out on the suspicion that his morality was not quite up to the requirements of

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LAW? and although the walk and conversation of a third had been unsuccessfully attacked, it was always thought that this was owing to some peculiar LUCK. However all this may be, such at least were said to be the considerations which led to the formation of a cabal against the presentee to the parish of Veto before he had delivered his trial discourses, or had even been known to or seen by his opponents.

Great, then, was the excitement when the day fixed by the Presbytery for preaching these discourses arrived. The church could not contain the numbers that flocked from all parts of the country, including the official members of Presbytery deputed to be present, and who put up at the house of one of the leading objectors!

When the presentee walked up the pulpit steps, there was a general buzz among the congregation.

"What a head of red hair he has!" said one of the embryo dissentients.

"Take a note of it, Sheepshanks," said another; "we were told by Messrs Horn and Poind, the agents, to put down everything."

"And, Helen!" excitedly exclaimed one of the lady coadjutors, "I declare he actually squints!"

"No doubt of it, Puncheon," said Sheepshanks; "and did you not observe that his legs are decidedly



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objectors, with a view to being discussed at a meeting of the conclave.

Whether the little oily man was present, and helped to draw up the objections, may be left to the imagination of the reader.

The sermons at last found their way to the hands of the clerk of Presbytery, and in due time a day and place were fixed for moderating in a call to the presentee, according to the law and practice of the Church of Scotland.

CHAPTER II.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTORS AND THEIR COADJUTORS—THE REV. ADAM P. SNEAKER, EXPECTANT PRESENTEE—PLANS FOR A PUBLIC MEETING AND DINNER TO THE PRESBYTERY.

IT was soon known throughout the parish that the presentee was to be opposed. No movement was, however, made by the people, but the cabal was active. There were four aristocratic gentlemen in this body. The first was Mr Sheepshanks, cattle dealer, a short, burly, fierce-looking fellow, with a face so like a sky terrier's that one sometimes wondered why he didn't bark. His lips, when he was irritated, disclosed a set of teeth which made you feel uncomfortable about the heels! He had driven cattle so long that he thought he could drive men too. He was the most energetic and determined of the objectors, not that he cared about the kirk himself—he was seldom or never inside of it, and, in fact, did not belong to the Church of Scotland.

The second caballer was Mr Puncheon, distiller, a hulking skunk, with a Bardolphian nose, who could with ease put two or three bottles of whisky under his

10 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE OBJECTORS.

belt at a sitting, and could seldom sit at ease without doing it—a man whom it would be hazardous to send down a coal-pit without a Davy's lamp about his proboscis! He was related to the M'Corkscrews.

The third member of the cabal was Mr Porter, a brewer, a jolly, good-natured Englishman, and an Episcopalian. He confessed that he did not know what all the fuss was about, that he was an objector for the reason simply that others were, and because he thought the deceased M'Corkscrew had been a very decent fellow, and that the parish should, if possible, be kept in the family.

The fourth member of the cabal was Mr Stirk, a drover, who was very seldom in the parish, but his mother had a bothie there, and he went to church about once a-year, but never sat at a communion table.

When it was ascertained that the presentee was a married man, these worthies resolved to drive him out of the parish, believing that having accomplished that, they would get their own choice of a minister. They were confirmed in this resolution by the Rev. Alister M'Cringer, of the parish of Ochonochree, the oily-faced individual already mentioned as having been tutor in one of their families, as well as by Mr Smites, the schoolmaster, who was himself coming out for the ministry. Supported by these men they secured the services of the only two elders in the parish, to wit,

Mr Quaighhorn and Mr Fillyerglass. M'Cringer was the leader of the Presbytery, in which he could command a majority, even when all the members attended its meetings. Several of that estimable body, however, were wont to absent themselves when anything disagreeable was to come up, or if present, they generally declined to vote. Besides having the support of this influential individual, the objectors had the legal assistance of Messrs Horn and Poind, writers, Glasgow. With such powerful aid it is not surprising that they felt confident of success in carrying out their laudable intentions with regard to Mrs Dorcas McPhillabeg or M'Corkscrew, relict of the deceased, and her amiable daughter, Miss Flora Letitia M'Corkscrew, as well as attending to the interests of that youthful "Dowb," the Rev. Adam Sneaker, between whom and the latter lady an affectionate intimacy had been established, with the expectation, on the part of the gentleman, of stepping into the manse and glebe. The acquaintanceship had been brought about by Mrs Pry, the village post-mistress, a near relative of young Sneaker.

"Never heed, ma callan," said she to the devout youth, who, shortly after the parish had become vacant, paid her a visit; "altho' she's raither auld, and no verra bonny, she's plenty o' tocher, and ye'll be sure tae get the kirk."

"Do you think so?" said he eagerly.

"A've nae doot o't; an' ye ken she's rale fond o' poetry, an' yere a great poet yersel', sae ye wad be weel matched."

"Hum," said Sneaker, "I think my verses are not amiss, although that rascally editor of the *Glasgow Kettle-Drum* has declined several times to insert them."

"Why d'ye no send them tae the *Lunnon Times*? Am sure they wad pit them in."

"Well, I think I shall. I don't see why I shouldn't. I have seen much worse in its poet's corner when it does give space for a poem."

"A think ye maun get intil the kirk an' manse first, and leave the poetry till aifter yere mairried."

"But you forget, aunt, that I am not yet acquainted with Miss M'Corkscrew, and I don't know that she would have me."

"Losh me!" replied his worthy relative, "there's naething easier than gettin' acquaint wi' her. She's a great freen o' mine, and tells me a' her mind. A ken she's gey keen aboot gettin' a man, an' yere jist the verra ane that'll suit her. She's comin' tae tak' a dish o' tea wi' me the nicht, sae ye maun bide, an' a'll introduce ye."

"Oh! but you know, aunt, I've promised faithfully to the Rev. Mr M'Sneevish, of the

parish of Sneeshan, that I would preach for him to-morrow."

"Hoots! awa, man; hae ye nae sense? A want ye tae preech in oor ain kirk the morn,—they've got nae supply, ye ken, an' it'll be a gran' chance for ye, aifter seeing Miss Flory, an' spoutin' yere pootry, an' getting the saft side o' her, tae wag yere pow in her faither's poopit."

"But what am I to do with M'Sneevish?" asked the already persuaded Sneaker.

"Jist write him a bit caird letter that ye've been suddenly ta'en wi' the premunitories, and a'll gar Duncan yoke the post gig an' gang wi't the noo. Am sure ye telt me that ye feelt raither queer last nicht?" said the pawky aunt.

"Well, but he'll be sure to hear that I preached here."

"Aweel, ye can jist tell him that ye got quat o' the premunitory symptoms wi' strong brandy an' murphy. A railly think a'll hae tae gie ye a glaiss, as ye're no lookin' jist sae weel as a wad like tae see ye whan Miss Flory's comin' here."

It is needless to say that Sneaker took both his aunt's advice and her brandy—that he met the interesting Flora, spouted his poetry, preached in the church, pleased the lady, but sadly displeased and disappointed M'Sneevish.

As already stated, all the family interest had been used to secure Sneaker's appointment to the parish, but without success. Poor Flora began to think that his attentions were not so marked after the Rev. Fergus Ochtertyre had received the presentation; and perhaps they were not; but although Sneaker did not recite quite so much of his poetry, he still had an eye to the main chance, and persevered, though with less heart, in his courtship, upon the assurance that his rival would be opposed and rejected. He, of course, entered heartily into the opposition to the presentee.

The unfortunate object of all this hostility was a man in the prime of life; stout, certainly, and perhaps not furnished with the handsomest or longest pair of legs in the world—still a thoroughly vigorous man. He had red hair and a slight squint, it is true, but he was a good preacher, and a person of considerable attainments. He was of irreproachable character, and had high certificates from his own Presbytery as to his usefulness as a minister. In short, he would not have been appointed by the Lord Advocate unless upon full inquiry and strong recommendation. He had no friends in the parish before he preached his trial discourses. After that, however, the people generally—so far as they dared to show their sympathy—were with him, and notably the Boniface of the

chief inn of the village of Porterbier, who rejoiced in the euphonious cognomen of Huistan M'Huistan. Huistan was a man of gigantic stature, and possessed considerable means and intelligence. He was at deadly feud with the upper ten (or rather the upper four), who affected to look down upon him as being an innkeeper, while he considered himself quite as good as they were.

"Tam them!" he used to say; "a kent them afore they gaed aboot in kigs and kairriages, triving thae ministers up and doon the pairish."

At the hostelry of this worthy tapster the呈tee took up his quarters, and there it was that his sympathising friends, under the leadership of Huistan, used to assemble as canvassers do at committee rooms during a contested election. The objectors had also a similar rendezvous in the village. Nothing was wanting but placards to give the business all the air of a municipal struggle for the civic honours of Porterbier.

"I say, Sheepshanks," said Puncheon, standing before the door of their house of call, "how goes the business? Have you seen Horn and Poind?"

"Of course I have," replied the other. "I've just arrived from Glasgow; clever fellow, Poind. By Jove! he understands the whole affair. Says we are sure, in the present temper of the Assembly,

to succeed—attaches great importance to the red hair and squint, but more to the shortness of the legs. Could we, he asked, ascertain their exact length?"

"Do you think we can manage that?"

"I don't know," replied Puncheon.

"Suppose," resumed Sheepshanks, "we get some pretending friend to volunteer to give him a suit of clothes, upon the ground that it would be well to patronise Rory, the tailor, on account of his great influence with the people of the village? Rory's just the man to take his measure."

"The very thing; but I'm afraid he would think they were *drawing* his leg."

"Not a bit of it. His coat is, at any rate, rather rusty, and I think we could easily manage it. We must see about this at once, before it is known that we mean to object to the legs."

"All right."

"But," resumed Sheepshanks, looking serious, "Poind says it would be necessary now to retain counsel. He recommends Mr Parsons Dodge, advocate, as being a man who stands well with the Assembly."

"Of course—I hear he's very successful."

"Well, but," said Sheepshanks, "he mentioned that it was also necessary he himself should have £100 to begin with."

"Eh! what?" enquired Puncheon. "What for?"

"Oh, just to begin with, you know—there will be retaining fees to counsel, agents in Edinburgh, travelling expenses, and a great many other things to pay out."

"But aren't we good enough for the account when the case is finished?"

"Of course; but you know Poind shrugged up his shoulders, said that it was the rule in all these heavy cases, and, giving me a knowing wink, he observed, 'You know, Sheepshanks, money makes the mare go.' He said that lawyers worked best when paid their fees in advance, so much so that the great Lord Mansfield, when a counsel, if he had to attend to any private matter of his own, always first took a handful of guineas out of a drawer, and put them into his pocket as a fee, to ensure his doing the work well."

"I suppose then, there's no help for it?" observed Puncheon, looking rather gloomy.

"Of course not," said the other. "I saw that Poind would not work heartily without cash, and a lukewarm lawyer's worse than none." He said that church cases took away a great deal of time from more profitable business, and that it was only on our account he undertook it at all. Sly fellow, Poind, but smart, decidedly smart."

"Well, we must have a meeting," said Puncheon, "but perhaps you could advance the money in the meantime?"

"Man, I bought so many cattle the other day that I'm far from being flush—better have a meeting. By-the-bye, talking of meetings, Poind impressed upon me the necessity of having, as soon as possible, a public meeting in the village, against the presentee, and to have it well packed. He has no friends except big Huistan, and his following, and we can pass any resolutions we like. Another thing he said was that it would be important to canvass the Presbytery. He recommended that, before we took any action, a dinner party should be arranged, to which the members of Presbytery ought to be invited. He said he would come down himself, and we could then feel our way amongst them. M'Cringer will, of course, help us."

"Good idea, but they won't all come."

"No matter, they should all be asked."

"Well, who'll dine them?"

"Let me see," said Sheepshanks, evidently not relishing the question, "my wife's not *quite* recovered from her last illness."

"If my house were as large as yours," replied the other, equally anxious to shirk the obligations of hospitality, "I would have no hesitation. Our dining-room, I'm afraid, is hardly large enough."

"I thought you could dine forty? There wouldn't of course, be so many."

"I'm not sure; but what do you say to asking Porter? He's a jolly fellow, and, like all Englishmen, fond of giving and taking a good dinner."

"Just the thing," eagerly replied the other.

Porter was thus fixed upon to provide a dinner, as a step introductory to a verdict of Presbytery against the presentee.

CHAPTER III.

HUISTAN M'HUISTAN OVERHEARS A PRIVATE CONVERSATION—IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCES THEREOF—GATHERING OF THE CLANS FOR A PUBLIC MEETING—PROCEEDINGS OF THE ELDERS ALISTER FILLYERGLASS AND MACCULLAMORE QUAIGHHORN.

THE two worthy interlocutors whom we left conversing, to wit, Messrs Sheepshanks and Puncheon, met by appointment, next day, to arrange about the proposed meeting.

“Well,” said Puncheon, “is it all right?”

“Yes; the meeting is to be held in the school-house to-night at eight o’clock. Smites promises to have the room in order, and I’ve got Fillyerglass, the ruling elder, to go round our work people to warn them to be there early, and fill the place before big Huistan and his friends can assemble. I’m told that Huistan means mischief; and do you know, Puncheon, I’m afraid the people generally are rather against us!”

“Well, then, the more need for action,—the sooner they know our views the better. It will keep a good many of them back. You should send Quaighhorn among them. You know they look up to him as an

elder and a man of piety. They say there's no one in the parish can pray like him."

"I'll do that by and bye; Maccullamore's influential, no doubt, but I want him for a special purpose in the meantime. You remember I mentioned that Poind said we should ascertain the length of the legs?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, I want Maccullamore to find that out in the way I told you before. I wish him to go to the meetings at Huistan's, and pretend to be one of themselves; to sympathise with the presentee, who will, of course, be glad to catch an elder; and, after he has gained his confidence, to persuade him to secure the favour of Rory M'Stitcher, the tailor, by giving him an order for a suit of clothes, not to be paid for in the meantime, but after his settlement. I have no doubt Maccullamore will manage it."

"Capital! And then Rory needn't make the clothes at all?"

"Of course not!"

The two worthies were standing close to one of the small public-houses which abound in the village of Porterbier, with their backs to a window, the upper part of which was open. It so happened that Huistan was within, treating an up-country shepherd to a "tram," endeavouring to enlist him in the cause of the presentee, and had succeeded the easier that the

shepherd's name figured in one of the pages of his entertainer's account-book, with a balance on the wrong side of its columns.

"*Diabhuil!* did you'll hear that?" suddenly exclaimed Huistan, striking his large fist upon the table. "Burn their wooden sauls! put a'll play them a plusky. Did you'll know that they hae ca'ed a meetin' the nicht in the schuleroom, an' that fallow they ca' Smites has gien it tae them? A'll smite him some o' they dark nichts, a'se warrant, for his impidence. A'll creep nearer the wa'," he cautiously added, "and hear what mair they're aboot."

So, carrying his bulky frame across the room, he leant his head against the window-shutters, a screen effectually concealing him from view.

"I'm afraid that fellow Huistan will give us some trouble," said Sheepshanks. A grunt from Huistan worthy of an Objibbaway Indian.

"I'm afraid so too," replied the other.

"We must have the school packed with our people before he can bring up his tail." Another grunt, with a slight shade of the growl.

"Haven't you some law-plea with him?"

"I had several, but the beast got the better of me in them all." A grim smile of satisfaction from Huistan.

"The fellow's as cute as a lawyer, and as litigious

as Peter Peebles. I was successful in a case against him in the Sheriff Court—he took it to the Court of Session—swore the Sheriff and I were too thick, because he dined pretty often at my house. He beat me in the Court of Session tho', with all expenses." Another grim smile from the listener.

"I think I know, however, how I can serve him out, in a way he doesn't imagine. I have ascertained that he's very anxious to get a piece of the hill ground to the east of his own land, from the proprietor, on a long lease, which would be very handy for him, as he can get no other that would suit him, and I believe he has nearly concluded a bargain with the factor about it; but I'll see if I can't spoil his little game."

"*Dam Ort!*!" at once roared out Huistan, in a fury. He was in the act of rushing out to annihilate the speaker, when the shepherd caught hold of him.

"Don't go out," he said energetically; "but ye sud see the laird as sune's ye can, and nail the bargain."

"A daursay ye're richt," said Huistan, breathing like a blacksmith's bellows—"the wicked scoun'rel, a'll be upsides wi' him for this."

The two worthies outside, hearing the noise of voices, walked slowly away, not suspecting that they had been overheard, least of all by big Huistan.

It now became a question of tactics between the contending parties. Huistan was fully forewarned by the unguardedness of his opponents, in talking too close to an open window. He was more than a match for them at anyrate in ingenuity and cunning, and resolved to lose no time in forestalling their intentions. So, on getting home, he called his faithful henchman, Donald Frisheal, and told him all that had occurred. He could trust to Donald in anything.

"Noo, Tonald," he said, "get Hamish, an' Tougal, an' Yachan, an' go roun' in a direckshuns, an' gaither a' oor freens here at sax o'clock. A'll keep an e'e on the schulemaister, an' set a watch on the ither party."

"Ishpal," he continued, addressing a great, strong-looking, red-haired damsels, "put the big-room in order, an' the muckle kettle on the fire, there'll be something tae brew here the nicht, a jalouse; an' tak' oot that keg o' Islay in the press, and pit it ben the room."

"Tam the fellow!" he muttered, "he wud try to tak' ma lease frae me, wud he?"

"An' Tonald," he quickly added, "be sure an' tell them a' tae bring their sticks wi' them."

"*An bheil thu tuigsinn sin?*" i.e., "do you understand that?"

Donald gave a comical look, but made no reply. Silence was his most comprehensive answer.

To do the other party justice, they were not behind hand. That slyest of all godly elders, Alister Fillyerglass, was moving about indefatigably mustering supporters. Alister would not, of course, be at home in the House of Commons as a whipper in, but here he was decidedly the right man in the right place. No actor could possibly excel him in the art of turning up the eyes, or in the other outward forms of devotion, although many a poor actor whom the world would consider to be without the pale of the Church, has more true religion in his heart than a hundred Fillyerglasses.

To some individuals who were unwilling to go to the meeting, Alister would say—"Ye ken the maister 'll nae be pleased if ye dinna gang;" and should any one answer, "There'll be plenty there wantin' me," the ready reply was. "Aweel, aweel, if a' body said that, there wad be nane ava. Sae jist pit on ye're *breachan* (plaid), an' come awa'."

"Man," he would quietly add, if he saw any further hesitation, "A maist forgot that the maister tel't me tae ax ye if they'd gi'en ye ony drafF for the beasts?" The plaid was belted and the bonnet donned in a twinkling.

In this mode did Alister gather together his forces for the approaching meeting. Nor was Macullamore Quaighorn idle. He slowly and reverently wended

his way towards the hostelry of Huistan M'Huistan, where the presentee was then residing, and, saluting the landlord with one of his blandest smiles, asked if the Rev. Mr Ochtertyre was in.

Huistan knew very well what he came about, but he was going to play a deep game of his own, so he looked up with a grim attempt to be pleasant—it could not be called a smile, for that was, in his case, a facial impossibility.

"Wad ye like tae see the minister?" he asked, in a half surly tone of voice, intended, however, to be pleasant.

"Weel, a jist wud," was the grave reply.

"A hope ye're to be on oor side?" said Huistan.

"Weel, a'll no say a'll no. A sud jist like tae hae twa-three words wi' him, an' if he satisfies me on ane or twa points o' his last sermon, a think a'll sign the ca'."

"That's richt," said Huistan, giving him a slap on the back that nearly drove the hypocritical breath out of his ill-conditioned body. "Gang up the stair, and ye'll fin him in Number 3."

Macullamore did as he was told, and for the present we shall leave him.

At the appointed hour, Huistan had in his big room a gathering of the clans. The whisky flowed fast and free, for there was not much time to lose,

and, to make its effects quicker, it was judiciously mixed with the boiling water and sugar which go to form that potent liquor vulgarly called toddy. Huistian seemed determined that, as they were engaged in a church contest, his supporters shculd not be found wanting in spiritual influence.

From the memorable day in April, 1661, when, on the re-introduction of episcopacy into Scotland, that exemplary female, Jenny Geddes, threw her stool at the Dean of Edinburgh's head, at a time when, as Sir Walter Scott slyly remarks, "there was a free distribution of liquor," the contentions in the kirk of Scotland have been more or less affected by the article picturesquely described as "mountain dew."

Like a skilful strategist, Huistian had sent out his scouts to watch the motions of the enemy, and the proceedings of the schoolmaster, whom he could never forgive for having taken down his eldest son's first pair of unmentionables—he had grown out of his kilt, and flogged him over a form.

"The beast," Huistian used to say, "he wud ne'er ha'e dune it but tae pleese that rascal, Puncheon. I had ma ain jalousings whan Ian telt me that Tonald Puncheon, the guid-for-naething son o' a wurse faither, aifter he had thrown him doun in a warstle, said that his faither wad gar him get a guid taillyer's nip for his new troosers!"

The schoolhouse was within eye-shot of a small room which Huistan kept for himself, and which might appropriately have been called the lion's den. There he sat, an impersonation of the ferocity of the latter, and the watchfulness of another and smaller animal said by naturalists to belong to the same race.

Huistan's quick eye detected the apparition of Smites as it flitted past the window. He was a cunning fellow, Smites. Instead of going along on the opposite side, as he usually did, where he would infallibly have been seen, he took the course of a wary Pawnee—he moved up stream, and then stealthily dropped down upon the side of his enemies, rightly supposing that they would be looking with eager eyes for his paddling down the other.

"Ugh!" exclaimed Huistan, with a grunt suggestive of Chingachgook "t're's ta prute!"

"Ishpal," he said, addressing his caroty haired maid of all work, "tell them tae pe ready—the schulemaister's awa' bye the noo."

At this moment a messenger arrived in hot haste from the opposite quarter of the village, saying that the enemy were approaching.

"Hoo far are they awa?" Huistan quietly asked.

"They're jist doon at Jock M'Groggy's"—the landlord of the rival "Inns," as it was called,—“put

they're a' tukeing a dram," significantly gasped out the exhausted Mercury.

"Ay, ay," said Huistan, with something like the confidence which must have possessed Wellington when he exclaimed at Waterloo, "Up, Guards! and at them." He gave one glance, however, towards the schoolhouse. He observed Smites at the door with the keys in his hand, who, casting a furtive look behind, but seeing his friends at no great distance, and nobody coming from the direction of Huistan's establishment, quickly opened the door and entered, sending a boy to hasten on the procrastinating dram drinkers.

Smiles, not expecting the *coup* that was intended was making some little arrangements within, when, the light from the door being suddenly darkened, he looked up, and beheld with dismay the bulky frame of Huistan, with a crowd of caterans at his back. The chief and his followers quickly and quietly seated themselves.

Not a voice was heard, not a warning note,
As his course to the benches he hurried,
Not a gillie mistook the order he got,
As he walked to his seat unflurried.

The other party were completely taken by surprise when they found on their arrival that the schoolhouse was almost entirely in possession of the foe. They

observed, too, with alarm, that almost every man had in his hand what an Irishman delights to call "an illigant bit av an oaken towel." The place was, however, soon filled, and sometime afterwards the proceedings began.

C H A P T E R I V.

SCENES AT A PARISH MEETING—SIGNAL DEFEAT OF THE OBJECTORS—AN ELDER TRYING TO DRAW A MINISTER'S LEG—HYPOCRISY *versus* SIMPLICITY.

WE left the meeting ready to proceed to business.

There was a platform, but no occupants. Nobody seemed to take any charge of the proceedings. There was apparently neither a leader nor a programme. The schoolmaster had disappeared. A broad grin was visible on Huistan's face, who felt himself master of the situation.

It was considerably past eight o'clock, and some of the people who had been so judiciously herded by Fillyerglass began to wonder why, or how, they had come there. They were conscious of having been earnestly pressed to be present, and knew that they had not got so many "trams" for nothing, not to speak of their prospects of draff!

Huistan was just rising to his feet to make a motion, with the confidence of a parliamentary leader after the Whip of his party has intimated that it is safe to go to a division, when the rattle of wheels, and

the clattering of hoofs was heard. Suddenly the sinister face of Smites appeared at the door with a triumphant look, which, however, by no means disconcerted Huistan.

Sheepshanks, Puncheon, Stirk, Porter, and their leading supporters, now entered, accompanied by some ladies, escorted by the Rev. Mr Sneaker. They paused for a moment, and looked confused. Something evidently was wrong.

"Mak' wey for ta leddies and shentlemans," cried the officious Fillyerglass.

"Stop a moment," said Sheepshanks, with admirable coolness, "you haven't got enough of candles, and you will require more chairs. We will go and get some for you."

"I say," whispered he to Puncheon, "just come out here for a moment, will you?"

They stepped out—

"How the deuce has this happened? Why, that ruffian, Huistan, has completely taken the wind out of our sails. Confound it, this is a serious job! I see he has got the meeting packed with his own party. What are we to do?"

"Blessed if I know," said the other, "send for more men, I suppose."

"But, bother it, if they were here there's no room for them!"

"Well, but they could make a noise outside, and we might easily say in the newspapers that the place could not hold all those who were unfavourable to the presentee."

"No doubt, as matters stand, that would be quite true; but if it were to be known that it was filled with people who were all in his favour, what then?"

A dubious shake of the head was the only answer.

"But you know, Puncheon, we must do something."

"Of course," replied the other.

"Well, I would recommend you to send for as many men as possible, and, in the meantime, we can go on, so as to keep matters moving, till they come; and they should bring sticks with them, for Huistan and his party have all bludgeons, and I fear there will be a row."

"Good gracious! do you think so?"

"I do."

"Then, by Jove, I won't take the chair, as I had intended. Will you?"

"No, thank you."

"Then, what on earth's to be done?"

"Why, I think Stirk will take it. He doesn't care about a scrimmage or a broken head, and appears to feel proud of his cranium in proportion to the number

of cracks in it, as some people prize their china more highly the more it is clasped or cemented."

"But he's like the Mayor who spoke before King George—'a bad hand at a speech.'"

"We'll try Porter."

"Oh! no, that would never do."

"Then, we must just take Stirk. Call him out for any sake, and let us go to work."

Stirk was called out, and instructed as rapidly as possible. When he was sufficiently primed with directions—he had been so before with something else—they re-entered the schoolroom, and mounted the platform, Sneaker and the ladies being accommodated with seats in the area. Stirk, having taken the chair, went to work at once.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "I'm no good at speaking"—

"No," grumbled Huistan, "ye're better at droving."

"Wha's that making a noise?" called out Stirk.

"It's me speaking tae mysel'," said Huistan.

"Oh! that's you, is it? ye'd better keep a civil tongue in your head."

"We'll see aboot that," was the reply.

Stirk resumed—"The minister's deed, an' we'll need another in's place, an' I'll jist read a paper that's in ma haun, that says we require a young, vigorous, an' energetic minister."

Stirk, no doubt unconsciously, turned his eyes towards the group where the youthful Sneaker, with a spotless white tie, was seated beside the fair Flora Letitia M'Corkscrew. By a simultaneous movement the eyes of the whole audience turned in the same direction, to the confusion of the amiable pair, who, with downcast eyes, looked as modest as if they were already at the altar. Before an impatient gesture from Puncheon could recall Stirk to his duty, Huisstan's sonorous voice was heard asking, "D'ye want him tae mairry onybody in the pairish?"

Here a scene of dire confusion ensued. The blushing Flora glanced tenderly at Sneaker, but he, like most men in such circumstances, failed in courage, and knew not exactly where to look, although his aunt, the postmistress, nudged him, and poking his ribs, whispered, "Haud up ye're heed like a man."

"Huistan M'Huistan, ye drucken auld fule," roared out Stirk, "if you'll stop me again, I'll kick you oot o' the meetin'."

"Ha, ha!" grunted Huistan; "Man, I wud thraw the neck o' ye afore ye cud say 'Jake Robison!' Ye're weel named—ye're naething but a hielan' stirk. I hae seen some o' ye're ain beasts better lookin', an' wi' mair brains than ye hac. You a chairman! Lord help us! They may ca' ye a chairman if they mean

that yer heed's made o' the same stuff that yo're sittin' on!"

Here the uproar became general. Stirk was in the act of springing from the platform, but was prevented by his friends.

Having cooled down at last, he said—"Ladies and gentlemen, this conduct's disgraceful, an' all I hae to say is, that Mr Ochtertyre's no fit for this pairish."

So saying, he resumed his seat.

Huistan rose almost immediately, and said—"I say that he *is* fit, an' he ocht tae be oor minister, an' every ane wha thinks sae, staun up."

Almost the whole meeting rose.

"Noo," said Huistan, looking round triumphantly, "I say that Mr Ochtertyre's cairried as the minister o' this pairish," and sat down.

"I say that too," cried one of his supporters.

Stirk, boiling with rage, and addressing the last speaker, bellowed out, "Tonald Campbell! it wad pe far better for you tae gang hame an' look aifter ye're pastard weans!"

"Tam you!" roared out Donald, "if you'll tould me that again I'll knock your prains intil your pelly in twa minutes or thirty!" and, without giving the irate Stirk time to repeat the obnoxious admonition, he rushed upon the platform and seized him by the throat.

The scene that ensued is indescribable. Candles went out ; females screamed ; men grappled with each other, and cursed and swore in unexceptionable Gaelic, but very indifferent English. People found themselves outside without very well knowing how they got there, but in many cases minus a coat-tail or a hat. Donald Campbell appeared with the breast of Stirk's shirt as a trophy. The ladies, somehow, got away safely along with Sneaker. It was time they did so, for a desperate fight commenced outside of the schoolhouse, the re-inforcement, armed with sticks, sent for by the conclave, having by this time arrived. They were, however, completely routed in the end by Huistan and his forces, who, after the battle, marched to the "Inns" to the sound of the bagpipes, amidst deafening hurrahs. As Huistan took his seat in the large arm-chair, he looked the *beau idéal* of a warrior returned from the field of victory.

Thus ended the first actual encounter between the contending parties.

We left the estimable Quaighorn about to enter room No. 3 of Huistan's establishment. On being admitted and introducing himself, he made one of his lowest and most reverential genuflections. Going up to the rev. gentleman, and taking both his hands and pressing them warmly, he said, with affecting

solemnity, "Oh ! Mr Ochertyre, I hope ye're weel in health and in the Lord ! I hae been sair troubled in ma conscience since yer last sermon, an' wud like tae hear some words o' comfort—we hae nae minister noo," he sorrowfully ejaculated.

"Well, Mr Quaighhorn, I'm glad to see you, and if I can relieve your mind of any burden, it will not only be my duty, but it will afford me great pleasure to do so,—sit down."

"Oh, sir ! but we might first join in prayer; it's a sweet preparation for every wark."

Accordingly, after an impressive prayer by the rev. gentleman, during which the sobs and groans of Quaighhorn were frequent and loud, the conversation was resumed.

"What troubled me," he said, "was the words o' yer last text,—Matthew, 24th chapter, and 22nd verse,—"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

"Alister Fillyerglass, the other elder, and mysel," he continued, "had a serious talk aboot the discoorse, whan he said that yer meaning was that God had elected some tae everlasting life, and that nane except the elect could be saved, and that unless we feelt in oor hearts that we were elected, we wud a' gae tae hell."



"No! no! no! my good man, that was not my meaning. If you will consider the text, you will easily see what I meant—what I said was, that for the sake of the righteous God will spare even the wicked. You might have seen, from the illustration I gave of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, as shown in the 18th and 19th chapters of Genesis, that I could mean nothing else. Had there been ten righteous men found there, these places would not have been destroyed. In the chapter of Matthew from which I took my text, Christ foretold the destruction of the Temple, and the calamities that were to follow, but the days of tribulation were to be shortened for the sake of the righteous. This, you will see, is just a repetition of God's declaration to Abraham with regard to Sodom."

"Then you don't think that Alister's richt?"

"Certainly not. You know what is said in the 1st chapter and 18th verse of Isaiah, 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;' and then there is that beautiful verse, the 17th of the last chapter of Revelation, which I was just reading when you came in: 'And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. - And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.' I need not refer you to other passages. These ought to satisfy you—"

'For while the lamp holds on to burn,
The greatest sinner may return.' "

"Oh ! but thae words are precious, Mr Ochtertyre. A'm feared, a'm feared, a'm a great sinner !" piously ejaculated Maccullamore. "A hae dreadfu' thochts sometimes. Satan has been sair temptin' me o' late. D'ye ye ken," he added, with an admirable look of horror, "he's been tryin' hard to put it in my heed that there's nae God at a' ! that a' things are but the effec' o' chance ! an' that there's nae hereafters ava!"

"Really, Mr Quaighorn, I'm sorry to hear that such doubts should enter your mind."

"Oh ! they haena entered it jist yet," quickly replied the elder, thinking he had gone too far, "they're only knocking at the door the noo. A'm battlin' sair wi' them ; but a couldna rest till a telt ye o' the attacks o' the great enemy o' souls."

"Quite right, Mr Quaighorn; I'm very well pleased that you should be so candid. God help us ! the best of us, if there are any indeed who can be truly called so, are not free from the whisperings of the evil one. But how did your thoughts happen to run into this channel ? Judging from myself, I find that there are some special influences to which I can generally trace the origin of such views."

"Aweel, I fear," said Maccullamore, "a'm verra muckle tae blame mysel'. A was deteneed ower the

Sabbath aboot a month ago in Glasgae, an' instead o' gaein tae the kirk as a ocht tae hae dune, a verra foolishly gaed to hear a Controversy in ane o' the ha's there, on the subject o' the existence o' God. A had heerd a great deal aboot thae Controversies, an' the thocht jist cam' ower me that as a wudna likely hae the chance again, a micht jist as weel tak it noo. It was jist a wicked invention o' the enemy, Mr Ochtertyre ; a see't a' noo, but it was a' dune for the best."

"It was a great pity, Mr Quaighhorn, that you went. It's just another instance of the saying, that evil communications corrupt good morals."

"Jist as ye say, Mr Ochtertyre—A heerd sae muckle blasphemy frae ane o' the speakers, that it washed clean awa a' the guid that was spoken by the ither, an' it comes a' back on me again an' again, an' railly maist overpoovers me at times."

"Well, Mr Quaighhorn, I sympathise with you very much, for I once was just as foolish as yourself, when a young man, in going to hear one of these Controversies upon the very same subject, and to tell you the truth, I never was any the better for it. I thank God, however, that I escaped its cōtaminating influence. I was just like you, I could not rest for many a night afterwards, but I prayed earnestly to God for faith and light, and they were vouchsafed to

me. I relieved my overburdened mind by pouring out my thoughts in poetry, which I then cultivated in secret. I will repeat the verses to you if you like."

"Oh! A'll be maist happy tae hear onything that could bring me comfort, Mr Ochtertyre."

"Well, I don't know that they can do that. You must go to a higher source than my poor effusions for the comfort you need, Mr Quaighorn; but it would be a pity if the arrows shot from the devil's bow should alone be certain to go to the bull's eye." Mr Ochtertyre then repeated in a slow and solemn voice, the following lines, entitled

GOD OR CHANCE.

FATHER of men ! earth's founder ! mighty God !
Creator of the universal world !
To Thee we offer up our fervent praise ;
To Thee we look for aid, for faith, and grace ;
To Thee we come on bended knee to pray.—
What though the hardened sceptic scouts Thy power,
And laughs to scorn the trust we place in Thee ;
Shall we forget Thee ? shall we yield our hopes
To withered sophistry or deadened faith ?
Can we believe that Thou art but the myth
Of fevered or enthusiastic brains ?
O God ! we see Thee not as Thou art seen—
We hear Thee not as angels hear Thy voice :
But we behold Thee in the clear blue sky,
Which showers Thy blessings on this nether world.
We see Thine anger in the gathering storm,

We hear Thy warning in the thunder's roar.
All nature speaks Thy voice and sounds Thy praise—
'Tis man—vain man, alone, who dares to doubt.
To doubt? O Father, blast him not,
While glibly with irreverent logic, he
Pours forth his blasphemy to mortal ears.
Proud infidel—philosopher—who gave the mind,
That intellect which rears its haughty head
Above Creation's cause, to find it hid
In darkness deeper than the darkest night?
Thou sayest 'tis Chance—there is no God at all;
He hears us not, nor sees us here below;
We see Him not—no man hath ever seen—
We live—we die—and are for ever gone!
Poor child of circumstance—benighted being!
How canst thou reason thus against thy God?
But tell me what is Chance? " 'Tis nature's accident"—
And what is nature? " the accident of chance"—
Vain sophist! can thy mortal frame,
With all its wondrous parts so fitly made,
Can thy immortal soul—how low it soars!
Belong to chance? Do all created things—
Earth, sea, and sky—those lustrous twinkling stars
Set in the robe of night—that silvery moon
Which, brooch-like, clasps it on her throbbing breast—
Does that bright sun in yonder golden sea,
For ever burning with the warmth of God—
Those countless forms of earth and sea—
Those denizens of air?—Speak!
Are these the accidents of Nature's whim—
The unpremeditated brood of Chance?

And could *one* Chance hatch such dissimilar things ?
Or are there then chances innumerable ?
Is Nature but a vast congeries
Of strange and independent chances ?
Poor doubting mortal ! why so far remote
From earth's Almighty Maker dost thou stray ?
Why close thine eyes to Heaven's own glorious light,
And fix them on a dark abyss below ?
Lo ! Chance is but some hideous night-bird's nest,
For ever tossed on chaos' slimy sea—
Shoreless, dark, unfathomably deep,
Silent and beaconless as yon black murderous beach,
At midnight's hour, where sea-birds fear to screech—
Like some bold watchman of the lonesome night,
Thou stand'st before a yawning alley, deep,
Endless as dread eternity, and black as hell.
Proud Reason : thy dark lantern strives to pierce
The overwhelming darkness with its glance.
In vain, proud man ! thou canst not throw one ray
Through that dark lane of black impervious gloom ;
But with the glorious lamp which Jesus lit,
We see beyond the dark unfathomed pit,
Wherein thy vain philosophy for ever sinks ;
For Faith and Hope stretch wire-like up to Heaven,
Where Christ has joined them to His Father's throne ;
On these we trust, by them we learn to pray,
And telegraph our soul's desires to God !

Thus did the good man, for he really was so,
endeavour to remove the affected doubts of the arrant
hypocrite before him. With the simplicity of a child

he trusted everybody, and although he had more than once suffered for his credulity, his simple faith was as strong as ever. In a district almost as wild as Tipperary, in which he now found himself, he was just the sort of man to have at once, if left unsupported, succumbed to the opposition got up against him by wily and unscrupulous enemies.

After having professed to be immeasurably comforted by the "unco Scriptural-poetry," as he termed it, Quaighhorn, with the humility and low cunning of the class to which he belonged, now proceeded to the object of his mission.—

"Ye hae greatly relieved ma mind, sir," he whimpered out, "an' a'll be glade to sit under ye an' hear sic words o' comfort; but am verra sorry tae hear," he added with a sigh, "that ill-disposed folk are trying tae oppose yer settlement."

"A railly think," he continued in the same strain, "ye sud show yersel' mair amang the people. Ye ken," he added, knowingly, "in this warld we hae mony enemies, an' it behoves us a' tae watch an' spoil their wicked plans. Ye ken St Paul says, in the Corinthians, 'All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient.'

"Noo, a think it's baith lawfu' an' expedient for ye tae defend yersel' an' uise the means. Ye see, we're a' commanded tae uise the means; an' ye ocht tae

tak' means tae meet an' prevent the doings o' the ither party."

"Yell ken better nor me," he added, "what is said in the Ecclesiastes, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.'"

To do him justice, Quaighorn was well acquainted with Scripture; and, like the Devil, could quote it freely to suit his purpose.

Resuming his argument, he said, emphatically, "It's ma belief the folk wad be wi' ye if ye gaed mair amang them."

"I'm afraid, Mr Quaighorn," meekly answered the minister, "that would not be proper in the position in which I am placed at present, and that it would just be made an objection against me if I were to do so."

"Naething o' the kind," replied the elder; but feeling that he had perhaps gone too far, he added, "If ye think sae, that's no' tae hinder ithers tae gang roun' an' dae what they can."

"Oh! of course not. My friends may do so, but I dare not myself."

"Weel, there's jist ae thing that a think ye might dae," began the cunning rogue, having brought matters to the point he was aiming at. "Rory M'Stitcher, the tailor, has mair tae say till the people than even me or Alister Fillyerglass, although we're

baith elders, which a sorely lament," he added, with a heavy sigh. "He's reckoned a great scholard, an' he baith mak's their claes an' writes their letters, an' they meet every ither nicht in his hoose an' crack ower the affairs o' the State an' the pairish."

"Noo," he added, slyly, "a think Rory's inclined tae be in yer favour, at least, sae I heerd, an' it jist cam' intil ma heed the noo that ye might maybe need a suit o' claes." He looked significantly at the rusty black coat of the presentee as he spoke.

Alas ! all married men cannot sport the glossy woaded blacks of the unique Webster, which usually adorn the backs of youthful Sneakers.

"And," he repeated, "it's jist cam' intil ma heed the noo——"

"O, the liar !" muttered Huistan, who had been listening all the time at the door.

"That if ye ordered a new suit frae Rory—that is, of coarse, if ye were needin' them, ye ken—that it wad dae mair tae keep the people in yer favour than onything else, for Rory wad be weel pleased tae hae the makin' o' a suit o' claes for a minister; for, dae ye ken, Mr M'Corkscrew, the decent man, aye gat his claes frae Embro', and Rory uised often tae threeten tae heave the great lang muckle traiveller man that cam' roun' for orders

ower the steamboat quay some dark nicht, when he was on his wey tae the boat."

"An'," added tho rascal in a diffident tone, as if afraid of giving offence, "as we're a' sae keen tae hae ye as oor minister, an' it's as muckle—or maybe mair—for oor guid as yer ain, we wudna alloo ye tae pey for the claes the noo. We wad dae't oorsells; but whan ance ye were settled in the pairish, ye could pey them whan ye liket."

The Devil is a skilful tempter. He knows his time and bides it, pressing us most when we are most unfortunate, like a coward hitting us hardest when we are down.

Mr Ochtertyre was not exactly in misfortune, but he was far from being in what it is usual to call easy circumstances. He at once said—"Well, Mr Quaigh-horn, I am very much obliged by your kindness. I do certainly require a suit of black clothes, and I had intended to bring one with me when I came here, but the Presbytery fixed a much earlier day than I expected, and I had to leave as I was. Since I shall have to stay here for some weeks, and to preach probably more than once in other parishes before I leave, I have no objection to give Mr M'Stitcher an order for clothes; but I cannot allow any one to pay them for me."

"Aweel, aweel, a jist thocht sae," was the hypocritical reply.

"An' whan wud ye hae yer measure ta'en?" he eagerly enquired, "for I wud like tae tell Rory as sune's possible."

"I really cannot say just now, but I shall let him know."

"Verra weel," meekly replied the old scoundrel. "Guid nicht, and may the Lord be wi' ye." So, making a low obeisance, he slowly left the apartment.

CHAPTER V.

HUISTAN'S PLANS FOR A RETALIATION—DIREFUL EFFECTS OF A DEBAUCH—A TAILOR AND AN ELDER SOUSED IN A DUCK-POND—MR PORTER'S DINNER PARTY—SKETCH OF MR SHARPER FOIND, WRITER, GLASGOW.

BEFORE Quaighorn got to the door, Huistan had made tracks for a room close to the stair-head, and, as the passage was dark, his first impulse was to kick the unscrupulous elder from the top to the bottom; but thoughts of a more effective revenge suddenly checked him, and he suffered the rogue to depart. After his exit, he gently tapped at No. 3, and on entering and saluting his guest, he quietly observed—"So ye'd a visit o' ane o' oor elders, Mr Ochtertyre?"

"Yes."

"What d'ye think o' him?"

"He seems to be a very worthy man—of a God-fearing disposition."

"Aweel, Mr Ochtertyre, ye may be richt, but the only disposition a e'er kent him tae hae was a verra strong ane tae cheat!"

"You shock me, Mr M'Huistan. I can hardly believe that."

"It's ower true, tho'," replied Huistan. "A'm as far seein' as maist o' folks here awa, put he's cheated me twice—ance in a pargain o' stots, an' anither time wi' tups. Ye may be sure he's come here for nae guid."

"What was he sayin' tae ye, if it's a fair question?" Of course, Huistan did not like to own that he had been listening.

Having been told the substance of what we have already related, he at once said—

"Mr Ochtertyre, he's been sent here by the ither pairty tae draw ye intil a snare."

"Do you really think so?" was the startled enquiry.

"A dae that, an' a hae verra guid reason for kennin' it tae be true; but there's nae uise sayin' ony mair aboot it the noo. Leave them tae me, an' a'se warrant a'll sort them."

"Very well, Mr M'Huistan, I'll rely, at all events, upon your not getting me into any unpleasant position."

After leaving Mr Ochtertyre, Quaighorn, rubbing his hands with delight at the success of his mission, and having in his eye a substantial recompense for his services, went straight to a meeting of his employers, which was to be held at M'Groggy's, and there reported progress.

"By Jove! you managed that well, Macculamore," said Sheepshanks, chuckling. "We won't forget you for this."

"Oh! dinna speak aboot that, Mr Sheepshanks. A wad dae mair nor that for yer faither's son ony day for naething."

"We can't expect that," said Puncheon.

"Weel, weel, if ye think sae, gentlemen, a must jist leave the reward tae yersels," said the wily elder, thinking it as well to nail the offer.

"But you must see Rory, and arrange with him at once," observed Puncheon.

"A hae seen him already, an' a's richt."

"You should get it done without any delay," said the impatient Stirk.

"Canny, canny," replied Quaighhorn, "ower muckle haste nicht spoil a'. We maun wait for a day or sae tae see if he sends for Rory voluntar like, ye ken. If no, a think a'll gi'e him anither ca' alang wi' the taillyer. A'm feared for that big rascal, Huistan M'Huistan, but a dinna think he's ony jalousings."

Huistan, on his part, was revolving in his mind how he could most effectually, and, at the same time, most safely punish the vile instruments of the unscrupulous plotters. At last he seemed to hit upon a brilliant idea, for he began to chuckle to such an extent that

his mighty sides heaved with something like the motion produced by the artificial sea one sometimes witness upon the boards of minor theatres.

“Tonald!” he called out, after he had nearly got over his cachinnatory fit, but with tears of laughter coursing down his rugged cheeks.

“Tonald, I say. Gang ower an’ tell Rory the taillyer, an’ Quaighhorn the elder, that Mr Ochtertyre wad like tae see them the nicht, at acht o’clock.”

“Ay, ay,” said Donald, wondering what was up.

He was not long in delivering his message, nor were the two worthies slow in putting in an appearance. Punctual to a minute they arrived, one being provided with his professional tape line, and book of measurements.

“Fine nicht,” said Huistan, as graciously as he was able.

“It’s a verra fine nicht, indeed, Mr M’Huistan; A hope a see you weel,” replied the tailor, with all the politeness of a country snip.

“Ye’ll be wantin’ tae see Mr Ochtertyre, a reckon?” said Huistan. “He telts me he was expeckin’ ye. He gaed oot for a walk, but a’m lookin’ for him every minute. Jist stap awa ben tae ma room, an’ a’ll be wi’ ye in a jiffey.”

“Huistan’s unco’ weel pleased the nicht,” said the

tailor, addressing his companion on reaching the land-lord's sanctum."

"Oh! A ken the reason o' that," replied Quaigh-horn, smiling. "Mr Ochtertyre 'll hae telt him that he's converted me in his favour, an' Huistan wants tae keep in wi' us, d'ye no see?"

"D'ye think sae?" said the tailor, incredulously.

"Nae doot o't," answered the elder; "Huistan disna for ordnar look pleesant for naething."

"Weel, maybe. A ken brawly he'll gae ony length tae serve a freen."

"Ay, an' tae hurt an enemy; but ye see he looks on us as freens, an' a wadna wunner noo tho' he brocht ben his bottle."

"They tell me he keeps guid stuff," said the tailor, "for his cronies, but a ne'er gat a drap oot o's bottle. A wudna objec tae a guid cocker the noo, for a feel kind o' weakly aboot the heart."

By and bye Huistan made his appearance, with a huge demijohn in one hand, and a basket with bread and cheese in the other.

Quaighhorn gave a knowing look at the tailor, as much as to say, "D'ye no see a was richt?"

Huistan knew his men thoroughly. Both were very fond of good liquor when they could get it for nothing, and Huistan's whisky was not of the kind called "Kill the carter;" whatever killing qualities



COOKING THEIR GOOSE.

it had were derived from a genuine barley kiln, as the two visitors very well knew from report at least, if not from personal experience.

After putting down the whisky bottle and several glasses of rather a portentous size (such a thing as mixing cold water with spirits is unknown in Porterbier), Huistan said briskly, "Noo, here's some stuff o' the richt sort. A'm rale glade that ye're cuming roun' tae oor side. Tak' aff yer drams."

The tailor at first could hardly realize this, to him, unexpected and unbounded liberality, and had he been learned enough he would probably have called to mind a classical allusion implying serious doubts as to the sincerity of certain ancient individuals, even when making presents; but he could not resist the strong cravings of an inclination, whetted by the hearty smack of satisfaction with which Quaighorn signified that he had tossed off his bumper; and the knight of the thimble, as was natural to one of his cloth, immediately followed suit.

"Noo," said Huistan, "jist rest ye awee till the minister comes. A maun look aifter some bizziness, but a'll be back in a while. Jist help yersels. It's nae verra often ye'll get a soup o' whusky like that."

So saying, he left the worthy pair to themselves.

"Weel, that beats a'," said the tailor. "Man, it's

rale poorfu' stuff that. A doot there's nae muckle water there."

"Deil a drap!" said the delighted Quaighorn, helping himself to another rummer.

"Fill yer glaiss, Rory. We may as weel weet oor whistles wi't the noo, as we'll no likely see't lang."

Huistan knew well that his two guests would not be slow to help themselves, and with the amiable intention of assisting them as much as possible, he had poured into the demijohn the very strongest whisky that came from the distillery, so strong indeed, that he could not face it himself, nor was it indeed fit to be drunk without having been previously reduced.

The elder and his friend were pretty well seasoned casks, but they were not proof against a liquor which was so much over-proof as the potent spirit then before them. Its age, too, disguised its power, by giving it a pleasant mellow taste, while its pungent aromatic flavour sensibly tickled the olfactory nerves of the veteran topers. They pledged themselves rapidly and quietly, and gave toasts which would have sounded traitorous and ungrateful in Huistan's ears, had he heard them.

"*An là a chl s'nach fhaic*"—i.e., "Every day that I see you, and that I don't see you," said the tailor, warmly grasping Quaighorn by the hand.

"Oh! every day till you, Rory," affectionately

responded the elder. "We've managed gey weel tae come roun' the minister an' his man, Huistan."

By and bye the tailor began to sing in Gaelic—

Mhaillidh Dhòun
 Barrfhionn donn
 Mhaillidh Dhòun
 Stiùradh dhachaidh.

Mhaillidh Dhòun
 Barrfhionn donn
 'Sgoltadh tòun
 'S'gan eur seachad.

"Got!" muttered Huistan to himself, as the sounds reached his ear, "put that's prave whusky! Gie me Ardbeg for getting the speerits up quick."

Time flew past, and the two topers had, without knowing it, sat for about a couple of hours. They took "no note of time," not even "from its loss," as Young hath it. It is needless to say that they kept no count of the number of glasses they swallowed, seeing that it was quite safe to reckon in this matter without their host. The whisky therefore, as a matter of course, proved too strong for the jolly pair of Bacchanals, and the tailor began to show unmistakable symptoms of being pretty far gone.

"I say, Quaigh-h-horn, where's that d-d-d—d

mi-mi-minister, eh? Troo-oo-sers mea-me-a-measure?
Yes. Mea-me-a-measures—me-me-men—not mea-
mea-sures, I say, eh?" (Hiccup).

"Whi-i-sht, Rory," whispered Quaighorn, who was not quite so drunk as his friend, but whose senses were pretty well obfuscated. "Am af-af-eared ye're fou.—A think ye-ye-ye'll hae tae pit-pit it aff."

"Pit-pit aff ma troo-oo-sers! See-see-see the minister te-te-te-totally d-d—d first. Wha-wha-what does he want wi' ma troo-oo-sers, eh?"

"Who-who-who're you," he stuttered, addressing the demijohn on the table, "ye og-og-ogly black-looking dee-dee-deevil? Are ye the mi-mi-minister, eh?" and he made an ineffectual attempt to clutch the unoffending John, but was prevented by Quaighorn.

"Hoots, toots, man! that's the whu-u-usky b-b-bottle," he said, holding the tailor back.

"Lie!" retorted Rory. "N-n-never saw saw a b-b-bottle like that afore. A'll tak' ye're mea-me-a-measure noo. A see yer sho-ort in the n-n-neck, an' l-l-legs weel enuch," he stammered out, fumbling for his measuring tape, and looking at the object on the table with the glazed stare of vacuity.

Huistan had timed his men to a nicety, and now judged that both of them would, to use a mild phrase, be unfit for business; but he had not yet had his

revenge. He possessed some skill in the use of medicine, having at one time kept a store, in which he sold, among other articles, all those drugs in ordinary use. He prescribed, besides, in cases of emergency, in the absence of the village doctor. He was, himself, sometimes troubled with pains in the chest, to relieve which he was obliged to use a liniment, of which croton oil formed a part. He happened to have a bottle of that powerful cathartic in his possession. Putting a sufficient number of drops into two tumblers, he told Ishpal to follow him with boiling water, and going into the room, he called out in a cheery voice—

“ Hallo! hoo are ye gettin’ on?”

The voice seemed to have a magical effect upon both parties. They suddenly gathered themselves together, and it actually appeared as if their wandering senses had returned.

“ Come, come! look alive!” said Huistan, “ A’ve brocht ye some boiling water tae mak’ a guid tumbler o’ toddy, for a think the minister must hae gane into the country, an’ winna’ be back the nicht.” The worthy presentee had been in the house all the time, but knew nothing of what was going on.

So saying, he poured a glass of whisky into each of the tumblers, put in the necessary quantity of sugar and hot water, and handed them to the two topers,

who eagerly received them, and swallowed their contents almost at a gulp.

Huistan waited for the effect with a comical look of inquisitive expectation. He had not very long to wait, keeping up a conversation, however, with his unsuspecting victims.

By and bye there appeared sundry twitchings and twistings on Quaighorn's face, and he shifted himself about very uneasily. The dose—a very powerful one, took more rapid effect, however, upon the less hardy tailor, and all at once, he roared out frantically,

“*Diabhuil!* she'll pe pooshioned! *Dhia, dhia!* what will she'll do?”

On hearing this, Quaighorn, pressing his hand upon his abdomen, and leaning forward with a horrible grin, called out—

“Oh, Lord! she'll pe pooshioned too. Send for ta doctor.”

“Hoots, toots,” said Huistan, “ye'll no be pooshioned at a’—ye'll jist hae ta'en something that hasna’ agreed wi’ yer pooells. Sae jist come awa’ hame, an’ a’ll see ye pairt o’ the wey.”

So saying, he took the unfortunate tipplers each by an arm, and led them out of the house, and along the street, which was now quite dark and deserted, in the direction of their houses.

The two unfortunates lived next door to each

other. A wicked thought now took possession of Huistan. He had only intended to see them so far on the way, but he took them on till they came opposite to their own doors, before which was a large duck-pond, green with slime and filth. Getting his wards close beside it, and steadying them for a moment, he whispered to the one—

“Tailyer, ye'd better tak' yer measure there. Ye're weel enuch acquaint wi' ae goose. Ye'll ken noo what the goose dubs is like.”

With these prefatory remarks he gave the unfortunate knight of the thimble a push, which sent him floundering into the pond.

“And, Quaighhorn,” he added, “sin ye're sae sair troubled in yer conscience aboot the elect, an’ tha sort o’ things, ye'll be nane the waur o’ a bit dook in the sleugh o’ Despond.”

The splash and the roars of the unhappy pair soon drew the neighbours out of doors; but by the time lights were got, Huistan had disappeared in the darkness, singing to himself in high glee a slightly altered version of the last two stanzas of—

“There cam’ a young man to my daddie’s door.”

So ended this attempt to take the measure of the presentee’s legs. The end has a sequel, however; but meantime, as we have other matters on hand, we

must defer its denouement to a future stage of the narrative.

Messrs Sheepshanks and Puncheon had succeeded in getting the honest, open-hearted Porter, to give the dinner party, which that astute lawyer, Poind, recommended should be got up.

Porter, though he made no pretensions to gentility, was a man of considerable wealth and respectable connections. He had a large house well furnished, a larder never empty, and a well-stocked cellar. His heart was always open, and his door seldom shut, so that his neighbours (friends they could not be called) found no difficulty in getting access to both. While they partook of the good things of his table, and perhaps had occasionally a finger and thumb in his purse, the aristocratic descendants of thievish caterans and cattle-lifters, transformed by civilization into the modern drover and dealer in "cattles," affected to look down upon the blunt and outspoken Sassenach.

Porter was a bachelor, or probably the descendants of the caterans would not have "lifted" his glasses so frequently to their ungrateful lips, nor have caused the elastic bands of his purse to lose somewhat of their tension. Although giving the dinner party, he was considerably saved the trouble of selecting his own guests, as the aristoc-

raey did not associate with all the jolly Englishman's acquaintances. The amiable female coterie to whom reference has already been made, kindly relieved him of any difficulty he might have had upon that score, and issued the invitations for him!

The important day having arrived, Mrs McCork-screw, after "considerable pressing," agreed to act as matron. She was provided with a capacious easy-chair in Porter's comfortable drawing-room, and there sat to receive company with all the dignity becoming the blue blood of a descendant of the first robber of Lochow, or we should rather have said the first laird, for in the good old times, while he who stole only a cow was called a thief, he who stole a drove of cows was called "a gentleman lifter."

The dinner hour was stated in the cards to be five o'clock; but Mrs Dorcas knew, from bitter experience, that in this particular part of North Britain a "bunch of hours" was neither here nor there. She accordingly deemed it wise to tell the cook not to have the dinner ready before half-past six o'clock.

The first to arrive was Mr Sharper Poind. He had a keen eye for a fat client, as well as a sharp nose for a good dinner. He was one of those wiry little fellows, who seem to have no shadow. We once knew one of these thin lawyers, who, by the way, founded a very excellent institution called after his own

name, somewhere in the great glen of Albyn. He was the disagreeable possessor of a peevish, discontented-looking face, with a peaky little bit of a nose —red you couldn't call it; but it had that peculiar half-blue, half-reddish tint, which one may see on a red-hot poker when the heat is fading from it—a hybrid hue, in short, between magenta and mauve. He was so thin, that his everlasting blue coat, with its orthodox flat brass buttons, when on his back, reminded you forcibly of a purser's shirt on a hand-spike. Yet it was said that this attenuated disciple of Themis could polish off an ordinary leg of black-faced mutton at dinner with inconceivable ease, besides indulging in other dishes!

Poind was a much younger man than he of the reddish-blue nose, but not unlike him otherwise. To judge by the restless eye with which he regarded dish covers, and the impatient and almost imploring glances which he cast at any one saying an unusually long grace, his appetite must have been of intensely agonising keenness. We should like to have witnessed his countenance had he been one of the unhappy presbyters whom, on their way to the Assembly, the late Lord Robertson, when practising at the bar, caused to lose their breakfasts by occupying all the time the "Royal mail" remained at the Kin-gussie stage, in saying grace; some benighted clergy-

man, who imagined, from his portly and reverend appearance, that he belonged to the cloth, having unfortunately requested the wicked lawyer to "ask a blessing," which he did with a vengeance!

Poind was not a member of the Glasgow Faculty of Procurators, although his partner was. He was one of those enterprising individuals who, by dint of getting up a smattering of law and a little algebra, aided by the possession of boundless impudence, manage to emerge from behind the counters which limit their early ambition, to flutter before the world as full-blown accountants, either with or without the addition of the important letters "C.A." after their names—initials which in many cases would very well stand for an animal of a different description from that which the last of them is intended to indicate.

The first care of these fledglings, like that of the youthful jackal or juvenile pilot-fish, is to attach himself to the biggest legal lion or shark who will condescend to have him as a provider. He is contented at first with a moderate share of plunder, but he soon loses a taste for pickings and bones, and acquires a decided love for succulent flesh. By-and-bye he begins to hunt on his own account, and to appropriate the lion's food to himself—not without fear and trembling at first, lest the royal beast should get an inkling of his tricks, and find that he is drawing conveyances

of property, contracts of copartnery, indentures, marriage settlements, &c.,—but gradually he becomes bolder, and succeeds pretty well in feathering his nest, even under the noses of those who have been foolish enough to encourage him, until at last he can afford to say to any of his patrons demanding a share of his booty, as the Highland soldier did to a comrade, who expressed a desire for a portion of the valuables which he had taken from the person of a French officer—

“Teil a fear, Tonald, go an’ kill a shentlemans for yersel’!”

From the *Colluvies* we have described, sprang Mr Sharper Poind, an individual to whom impudence was of more value than knowledge, and whose idea of the legal profession was that it was a business in which any one endowed with a reasonable amount of brass had peculiar facilities for causing the coin of those more ignorant than himself to change from their pockets to his own.

Such was Poind, and such, we fear, are a good many “Writers” in some of the more important cities of this kingdom.

Of the other guests, and of the party, anon, in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

DINNER PARTY GIVEN BY THE OBJECTORS—MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF DUUNDERHEAD, AND THEIR WIVES—A LOCAL BELLE WITH £ S. D., CAPTIVATES A MONEY-HUNTING LAWYER—LEGAL AND CLERICAL CONFABULATION.

M^R SHARPER POIND'S arrival at the hospitable mansion of Mr Porter was not long in being succeeded by that of the Rev. Havral Clash, of the parish of Clavers, and Mrs Havral Clash.

The rev. gentleman had served his apprenticeship to a shoemaker, in the parish of which he had now the cure of souls. Having deserted the last, he acquired, by laborious study, through years of poverty and self-denial, as a student and teacher, the education necessary to fit him for the church. After becoming probationer, the Rev. Havral went about the country as an itinerant preacher, picking up an odd guinea now and then, by supplying the pulpit of some more fortunate brother, and finding great acceptance in the eyes of the class from which he had sprung, who looked upon him as a prodigy of learning and piety.

Fortunately for the Rev. Havral, the Disruption

of 1843 enabled him to attain the height of his ambition, which was to wag his touzy pow in the pulpit of his native parish, and instead of cutting up kip and beating obdurate ben leather, to thump the calf-skin of the pulpit bible, or, at his discretion, the sheep-skin cushions which formed the support of the sacred volume. Havral was not exactly a bad sort of a fellow. Few sons of St Crispin really are, but having had so much difficulty in getting a church himself, he seemed by a peculiarity not uncommon in some natures, to derive pleasure from seeing others, if not actually kept out, at least put to as much trouble in getting into a parish as possible. He was therefore easily induced to become a confederate of the wily schemer M'Cringer.

It was at first intended that the dinner should be what is usually called a gentleman party, but Mr M'Cringer said it would be better to make it general, for the sake of appearance. Thus it was that Mrs Clash accompanied her husband. She had been a servant with the old maker of brogues with whom Havral had been an apprentice. Although considerably older than her husband, he had chosen to fall in love with her; and to do him justice, he stuck to her as closely as his rosin used to do to his pack thread. They were married after he got the parish. Whatever she might have been before, she had now all the appear-

ance of a fiery-faced cook, fat and frowsy, with that peculiar contour of figure which gives perpetual promise of an event that never happens.

Messrs Sheepshanks, Puncheon, Stirke, and others, arrived sometime afterwards, accompanied by their respective wives. Mr Sneaker was also of the party. He escorted the fair Flora Letitia, her cousin, Miss M'Phillabeg, and a few of the local belles.

The drawing-room was getting lively, when up drove the Rev. Lauchlin Mackintrowsers, of the parish of Lochabernomore, and the Rev. Teevish M'Sneevish, of the parish of Sneeshan, who had agreed to come together, as they had to travel the same road. Truly the Disruption was a godsend to some of the licentiates of those days ! Mackintrowsers had been bred a carpenter, but somebody persuaded him that he had a genius above planing boards, and that it would be a deal better for him to turn his thoughts to the ministry. It was well known that he had the "gift of prayer," and there was little difficulty in convincing him that this was an open sesame to every acquirement, human or divine. With it he could easily overcome the Greek and Latin, including that stumblingblock of Scottish ministers, the quantities and particles of the former tongue. As for Hebrew, he believed it was so much like Gaelic, that except it was read backwards, there was little or

no difference. With regard to mathematics, he could have almost no trouble. He had learned mensuration and trigonometry at school, and had no fear of mastering conic sections, or the differential calculus. It was just the theory he wanted; so Mackintrowsers left the bench to study for the pulpit, and having no bar in his way, by some miracle, only to be accounted for, we suppose, by the gift of prayer, he succeeded in being licensed as a preacher of the gospel, but he had well nigh made shipwreck of himself and his divinity.

He had somehow got a presentation to an out-of-the-way Parliamentary church, in the Hebrides. When his trial discourses were handed to the clerk of the Presbytery, it was found out by a troublesome doctor of divinity, too learned for poor Mackintrowsers, that the Gaelic discourse was a free and easy translation of a remarkably good sermon by an English divine. Lauchlin was made "to lave that," as Sheridan, according to the polite compliment of the Irish game-keeper, made the covey of partridges do, which he had been vainly trying to shoot for the best part of an afternoon.

How he got another charge nobody seemed to know, but the "gift" must have been at the bottom of it.

There appeared next, the Rev. Ebenezer Sneck-draw, of the parish of Brose Athole, with his daugh-

ter, and the Rev. Inkhorn Skirleywhitter, clerk of Presbytery—the Rev. Mr M'Snee, of the parish of Gilliecallum, accompanied by Mrs M'Snee and daughter, and by Master M'Snee, whom they were afraid to leave at home, he had such a devilish propensity to open shut and lockfast places. Although not a youth of the genus called chubby, it would almost have required a lock of that description to keep him out of drawers and presses.

The last arrival was the Moderator of the Presbytery, the Rev. Mr M'Slykey, of the parish of Greetknowe. A most accomplished trimmer, he managed somehow, by an immense deal of fuss, to raise a mist, under cover of which he succeeded in escaping from scrapes, and in leading those who could not see through him to believe that he took a lively interest in their particular concerns. In this way he contrived to hold a dubious neutrality in almost all questions which came before the Presbytery, but his lubricity had become matter of notoriety.

What was supposed to constitute the independent or aristocratic portion of the Presbytery was not represented.

The dinner was excellent—the host was an Englishman, accustomed to good cheer. Even the irate Frenchman who, in the agony of extracting the stringy parts of a tough *biftek* from the recesses of

his teeth, where they had twisted themselves into something like a Gordian knot, would hardly have exclaimed on this occasion—“*In dis country God send de viande, but de dayveel send de cook.*” Porter had secured the services of an efficient *cuisinière* from his own county, Yorkshire. As a proof of her culinary skill, Poind almost devoured the whole contents of a venison pasty.

“Can I assist you to some more, Mr Poind?” said Porter, really admiring the thoroughness with which the man of law went to work.

At this moment the former saw the eyes of Miss Helen M’Phillabeg regarding him intently, whether with a look of wonder or admiration he did not know exactly, but he flattered himself that it was the latter.

He hastily said—“No, thank you; but if you have no objection, I’ll trouble you for the smallest possible quantity of the stewed hare, and a few oysters.”

There is one thing in which an Englishman is rarely mistaken—he generally knows, and knowing, always appreciates, an eating man. Poind’s wish was gratified—he received a helping that would have dined an average mason.

To enumerate the quantity and variety of viands which this gentleman put himself outside of, as a Yankee would say, would be too tedious. One would

almost have expected to see his lean body gradually expand, like that of the *cobra di capello* when gorging after a long fast, or, at all events, to exhibit some signs of plethora. But no; the fellow positively seemed more lively at the end than at the beginning ! Where he could have stowed all he took in it is impossible to say. Perhaps, like the ruminating animals, he had a second stomach.

"Who is that lady looking this way ?" he suddenly asked, addressing the Rev. Mr M'Cringer, who sat next to him. "I don't think I have been introduced to her."

"Aha ! Mr Poind," exclaimed the rev. gentleman, "you *are* a sharp fellow. You have scented £15,000 there !"

"Is that a fact ?" said Poind.

"It is ; and if you conduct this case well, I don't see why you shouldn't manage a more interesting suit on your own account."

"Well, it won't be my fault if the case, at least, is not well conducted," replied Poind. "But I think I haven't got a fair chance as yet. You have been making a mess of matters. The meeting and Quaigh-horn's miscarriage have done us no good."

"Not my fault, Mr Poind—not my fault, I assure you," said M'Cringer. "If they bungle well-laid plans, who's to blame ? You know what Burns says —

"The best laid schemes of mice and men
Gang aft agee."

"It's a pity," said Poind, musingly, "that we couldn't get the legs measured."

"So it is," said M'Cringer. "Do you know, I think he walks *haud equis passibus*."

M'Cringer had made a pause at "walks," to give emphasis to his quotation, and Poind, who was ignorant of Latin, but, like many others, pretended to know it, misled by the word "*passibus*," thought that M'Cringer, who was reputed to be a good classic, had asked him to pass the bottles, so, with a wink, as if to say—"I see what you're up to, old boy, you don't want them to know," said, in his blandest manner—

"With the greatest pleasure in the world," and was in the act of passing the decanters, when Porter exclaimed in his jolly voice—"I say, you two, I don't like to see the law and the gospel so close together, especially when they become bottle stoppers."

"A thousand pardons," said Poind. "I was just going to pass them along when you spoke."

"All right," replied Porter, turning round for the twentieth time to listen to the lamentations of Mrs M'Corkscrew as to the threatening aspect of affairs in the parish.

He had no sooner lent one ear to the disconsolate widow, than he was obliged to surrender the

other to Mrs Havral Clash, who favoured him with an interesting dissertation upon the best mode of rearing pigs and poultry. He had brought this infliction upon himself, however, for he had given the loquacious lady a pretty large "dram" as an appetiser before dinner, and an extra nip after the soles, to keep them, as he wittily remarked, from swimming.

"There are just two occasions, I think, Mrs Clash," he facetiously observed, "on which you take a dram at dinner in this country—when you have fish, and when you haven't!—ha! ha! Eh?"

"Oh, fie! Mr Porter. A'm feared ye hae gi'en me ower muckle o' that strong whuskey. They're surely rale big dram glaisses thae—they maun be for gentlemen an' no for leddies."

"Not at awl," chimed in the Rev. Havral, who had been pretty freely patronising the bottle himself. He seemed rather to relish the idea of his wife enjoying herself, and gazed upon her jolly, rubicund, perspiring face, with evident affection.

"It's a' verra weel," he continued, "for the leddies tae flyte on the men for takin' a dram, but ye'll maybe ken, Mr Porter, what ane o' oor poets says—

' Ta leddies they will glower an' blink
 Whene'er they'll sawt a man in trink;
 Put by themsel' they'll nefer wink
 At four pig trams o' whuskey O !'"

"Keep me!" exclaimed his astonished spouse, "did ye ever hear the like o' that? In a' the warld, whaur did ye learn sic trash o' poetry as that, Mr Clash? I never heerd ye say that afore."

Probably the Rev. Havral thought he had gone too far, for he turned his head quickly in another direction.

The "several trams," as Alister Fillyerglass used to call them, when he tried to talk pure English, not to speak of numerous helpings to sherry and champagne, had made Mrs Clash unusually eloquent on the subject of her porkers. Married women of her class have all a failing of this sort. Whether it be the poultry they rear, the butter they churn, or the stockings they knit for their husbands, they are certain to have some hobby of the kind if one could only hit upon it. They generally come out with it when in good spirits.

"Yes, Mr Porter," exclaimed Mrs Clash, with emphasis, "they're the beautifullest little pigs you ever seed; they're jist in prime order the noo for roastin'. Dear me! I wunner I was sae stoopit. I micht hae brocht ane o' them in ma ridicule. It wad hae been fine tae see't staunin' like a wee bould warrior in the middle o' the table, wi' its tail straucht, its heed up, an' its wee short legs set firm on the trencher, wi' a lemon in its mooth."

"An orange, you mean, Mrs Clash," observed Porter.

"Ay, ay, a oranger; but its a' the same a reckon."

"Quite the same, Mrs Clash—quite the same," said the amiable Porter.

"Dear me! tae hear that wuman talk," whispered Mrs M'Snee to her daughter, feeling annoyed at being so far from the head of the table, "naething but aboot pigs an' stots an' heifers."

"She's naething but a heifer hersel'," rather loudly ejaculated young M'Snee, regardless of consequences. A fearful look of wrath from his mother, and a squeal from the young hopeless, followed this remark.

"Oh! dinna nip me sae sair, an' a'll no say't again," cried out the scapegrace.

In the midst of this *fracas* the voice of the Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers was heard exclaiming—

"How did ye come, Mr Porter, to place the law afore the gospel? I'm sure that's wrong."

"Bless me! did I do that?" innocently asked the worthy host.

"Ye did that, I assure you," answered Mackintrowsers. "Ye said awhile ago that ye didna like tae see the law and the gospel sae close thegither."

"Well, I'm blowed if I know," replied Porter, looking rather sheepish, and feeling as if he had got into some scrape.

"And why not?" sharply asked Miss Helen Alicia M'Phillabeg, looking straight at Mackintrowsers.

Helen was a smart, well-educated, sensible young lassie, as they say in the North, with the additional attraction of £15,000, and had, as a Frenchman would phrase it, some twenty three years. She was an orphan, and was under the care of her aunt, Mrs M'Corkscrew. She was both good and bonny, and loved fun and frolic immensely. She had somehow a sneaking regard for Porter, whom, altho' nearly ten years her senior, she admired for his manly simplicity of character and correct principles.

"Why not?" she again asked, as Mackintrowsers seemed in no hurry to reply.

"Weel, I theenk," slowly articulated the *ci devant* joiner, "I theenk that oor profession ocht tae go first."

"Why?" was the curt rejoinder.

"Because we preach the gospel."

"Have you any Scripture for that?"

"Weel, a'm no jist sure the noo, but I theenk if ye gied me time I could fin' it oot."

"But if I can show you Scripture for the reverse, will you be satisfied?"

"Weel, I theenk I wud."

"Well, do you know any part of Scripture which says, 'On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets'"

"Bravo! Miss M'Phillabeg," exclaimed Poind.—Mackintrowsers looked confused.

"Now," said the intrepid Miss Helen, "that I have shown you that the law goes first, can you tell me where the verse I have repeated is to be found?"

Poor Mackintrowsers was in the act of swallowing a glass of very excellent port. It was literally wasting good liquor to bestow it upon one who knew as much about good port as he did about the *Lacrymae Christi* of Metternich's famous vineyard. He gulped it down as he would a basin of gruel, but his wine-bibbing career was well nigh cut short by the last question. The genial port, probably disdaining to be any longer relegated to such a vulgar limbo as the stomach of the Rev. Mackintrowsers, took advantage of the sudden stoppage of his breath, to rush down his windpipe—a most alarming gurgle instantly issued from his throat—he gasped spasmodically, and his eyes began to start wildly in their sockets, but a smart slap on the back from Porter, brought him sharp up to his bearings again.

With tears of agony he looked at Miss M'Phillabeg and gulped out, "Was ye speaking?"

"Yes," she replied, nearly bursting with laughter. "I was asking you if you could tell me where the verse is that I repeated a little ago."

"Weel, Miss M'Phillabeg, I really maist forget the noo."

"Then I must remind you that it is the 40th verse of the 22nd chapter of Matthew, for I was reading that chapter last night."

"Ye're quite richt—quite richt," said Mackintrowsers, recovering from his bronchitic attack, and greatly relieved to be quit of two such formidable tormentors.

In due course the ladies retired to the drawing-room, where they were soon followed by Sneaker.

The gentlemen being now more at their ease, a general conversation took place, which, in a short time, converged upon the topic of the day, to wit, the state of the parish.

"It was very wrong," said Puncheon, "of the Lord Advocate not to give us our choice of a minister, and to present a man unfitted for the heavy work of this parish."

"I think so decidedly," said M'Cringer, "and the people ought to show that they are not to be thus treated."

"They ocht, in ma opinion, tae hae a voice in the choice o' their ain minister," whimpered Mackintrowsers.

"That's ma opinion tae," remarked Mr Havral Clash. "I wish we had the old veto law still."

"Lord Aberdeen's Act is quite unworkable," chimed in the Rev. Mr M'Snee.

"Nae doot o't," chirrupped M'Sneevish.

"Well, well, gentlemen," interrupted the judicious M'Slykey, "we must just make the best of it. I dare-say if the Act got fair play it would do well enough."

"What do you mean by that?" said M'Cringer, fiercely. "Do you think we don't work it properly? I'm afraid you're getting some of Dr Brower's notions into your head?"

"By no means, my dear sir," said the supple M'Slykey, "what I mean is, that what we do in the Presbytery is either overturned or mangled by the Synod or the Assembly."

"Oh! that indeed," replied M'Cringer.

"No doubt of it," said Poind, coming to the rescue, and wishing to prevent anything in the shape of a quarrel. "I quite perceive your meaning, Mr M'Slykey. The Assembly hardly does justice to the labours of the inferior courts of the Church."

"Inferior coorts o' the Church!—what's that you say?" suddenly asked Mr Skirleywhitter, the clerk of Presbytery, evidently a little elevated.

"Oh! it's merely a term," mildly replied Poind.

"A term o' contempt, I reckon," surlily exclaimed the other. "Aren't we jist as guid's the Assembly? Isn't it composed o' Presbyteries?"

"No doubt, no doubt. I confess I'm wrong," replied Poind. "I ought perhaps to have said the initiatory courts of the Church."

"Ay, ye're richt noo," triumphantly exclaimed Skirleywhitter. "You see you lawyers need to be learned something at times."

"Always glad to get information, Mr Skirleywhitter."

The conversation was now carried on by the company in knots. Sheepshanks and Puncheon changed their seats more than once, their aim being to get the guests committed to the course of action which they were now determined to pursue. It is needless to say that they had no difficulty in accomplishing this.

A very animated conversation was going on between Poind and M'Cringer.

"You must really devise some means for putting us in a position to lead evidence as to the presentee's powers of walking over the rough hills and dales of this mountainous parish," observed the former. "I am confident he isn't equal to the task, from what I have heard ; and if, as you have just said, one of his legs is shorter than the other, and has sustained an injury, all the better for us. Besides, his neck, as I am told, is so short, and his body so heavy, that he must be knocked up with any continuous exertion.

"Now, I'll tell you," he added, slyly, "what I think

should be done. I learned in the village of Porterbier that the presentee is very desirous of preaching in some of the neighbouring parishes in order to extend his reputation, as his supporters call it, among the people, and to disabuse their minds of the stories that his friends say have been spread abroad against him.

"Now, suppose you were to ask him to preach for you, and give him quarters in your manse from Saturday till Monday. He would accept at once; for he can have no idea yet that any member of Presbytery is against him."

"Well?" said M'Cringer, with a look of malicious intelligence in his cold, grey eye.

"Well, then," continued Poind, rising with his subject, and not noticing that a servant girl was standing behind him with a kettle of boiling water for their next tumbler, "you could trot him out some nine or ten miles with one or two friends over the worst part of your parish, and watch the effect; and particularly notice how he mounted the stairs in your house; and afterwards," said Poind, big with the consciousness of a great discovery, "when seeing him into his bedroom, you could easily prevail upon him to have his trousers sent to the kitchen to be brushed, and then—"

"And then," said the delighted M'Cringer, "we

could take the measure ! The very thing, my dear fellow. You certainly have the bump of invention."

"My dear sir," modestly replied Poind, "in our profession a man must be up to everything. He must be, as Horace says, '*semper paratus.*'"

"Hallo ! who's there ?" he suddenly exclaimed, turning his head, and seeing the girl standing with the kettle. She did not, however, answer him, but addressing M'Cringer in Gaelic, intimated that she had just come in with the hot water.

"How long have you been here ?" asked Poind, rather uneasily.

"She'll no' understand ta shentleman's English," modestly replied the girl.

"Oh ! never mind," said M'Cringer, hastily. "I must speak to Sheepshanks and Puncheon about what you have suggested."

"Suppose we retire for a little to another room ?"

"All right."

The four worthies accordingly did so, and the plot was then and there matured.

"There is another thing," said Poind, "that I wished to bring before you. I have heard that a good deal could be raked up against the presentee in his present parish. He was, as I have been informed,

considered to be inattentive to his ministerial duties, and unsuited for the rough work he ought to have performed. I understand that the parish of Lochspelding is by no means so extensive nor so rugged and hilly as this one, and if we could get a good body of evidence from there, it would go a great way to help us. I think, therefore, we should at once send one or two knowing and discreet persons quietly to get up information before we begin to lead our evidence."

"A very judicious thing, indeed," said M'Cringer.
"I see you are quite up to what should be done."

"No doubt of it," observed Sheepshanks.

"But," said Poind, "it need not, of course, be done before the day for moderating in the call, and stating the objections; and I shall arrange all the details with you before then."

"Now, I think," he observed, "we are fairly on the track again, after having been thrown off the rails by that fellow, Huistan M'Huistan. You see what it is to have a lawyer among you," he observed, in a jocular vein.

"But we should return to the dining-room," he suddenly exclaimed.

His object in going back there was to have another tumbler before joining the ladies, as he did not feel quite up to the mark for a conversation with Miss

M'Phillabeg. Having fortified himself for this purpose, at his suggestion they all repaired to the drawing-room.

Thither we too shall follow them.

CHAPTER VII.

MINISTERIAL AND LEGAL GUESTS DESERT THE DIET *PRO LOCO ET TEMPORE*, BUT RETURN TO THE DESSERT—A LAWYER IN LOVE WITH £15,000—AN AMIABLE CLERICAL SNEAK AND A POETICAL HEIRESS—ECCLESIASTICAL LOVE IN A DRAWING-ROOM, AND LUDICROUS DENOUEMENT—MRS PRY, THE POSTMISTRESS, WITH A CONFIDANTE OVER A CUP OF TEA.

“**B**Y the bye,” whispered Poind to M‘Cringer, as they entered the drawing-room, “I have not yet been introduced to Miss M‘Phillabeg. You’ll do the needful, I hope?”

“Oh! of course; come along.”

“Allow me, Miss Helen,” said M‘Cringer, blandly, “to introduce my friend, Mr Poind, of the eminent firm of Messrs Horn and Poind, writers, Glasgow, who has come down to conduct the case against the presentee.”

“Mr Poind, Miss M‘Phillabeg.”

“Delighted to hear, sir, that you’re engaged in so good a cause. I hope you have none worse than this on hand.”

“I have very much pleasure,” replied Poind, “in making your acquaintance, Miss M‘Phillabeg. We

lawyers, like doctors, are obliged to attend to all cases.
It's our duty."

"What!" archly exclaimed his lively interrogator,
"whether you are to be paid for them or not?"

"Well," said Poind, "we of course expect to be
paid, but are frequently not."

"I have been told that you always take good care
of yourselves."

"Don't you think, Miss M'Phillabeg, that it is the
duty of everybody to do so?" smilingly answered the
other.

"Oh, certainly," retorted the lady; "but if all
stories are true, you not only do that, but leave very
little for others to take care of. It is said that you
swallow the oyster, and leave the shells for your
clients."

"Very good—very good, indeed, Miss Helen,"
said Poind, beginning to be a little more familiar.
"I'm afraid I have no chance with you in argument.
You would make a capital special pleader. I wish
we had you in our court."

"You wouldn't be inclined to make it a case of
courtship would you, Mr Poind?" asked the sly
creature, looking to the ground.

For a moment Poind's tongue clove to the roof of
his mouth. Was it possible that she had taken a
fancy to him at first sight? Had she not gazed upon

him at the dinner table, and attracted his attention so much, that he had asked Mr M'Cringer who she was ?

"Ahem," he at last mumbled. "I'm sure there are very few at our bar who would not be ready to do so."

"I look upon that as an evasive answer," softly replied the young lady.

Poind's spindle shanks began to feel rather shaky, and he was wondering what on earth he should say. The thought of having the owner of fifteen thousand pounds, and a pretty face to boot, at his immediate disposal, was too much even for his equanimity ; but at this critical juncture Mrs M'Corkscrew came up and said that the ladies were proposing to have a walk on the beach, and were just going to fetch their shawls.

"Delightful!" exclaimed the lively Miss Helen. "Will you come, Mr Poind?"

"With the greatest pleasure in the world," answered the extatic pettifogger.

"Are you not coming with us, Flora?" asked Miss M'Phillabeg, approaching an ottoman, where Sneaker and his charmer were engaged in animated conversation.

"I think not, my dear," said the latter, assuming a languid air. "I have got a slight headache, and am afraid of damp." ●

"Fiddlesticks," replied the other. "It must be

very slight indeed, for I saw you laughing heartily a few minutes ago, and you know the sand is as dry as a barn floor."

"Oh, Helen, how can you talk so?" exclaimed the amiable Flora, colouring. "You are such a teaze."

"But *you'll* come, of course, Mr Sneaker?" she archly said, addressing that bashful young gentleman.

"Well, Miss Helen," whimpered out Sneaker, "I should be very glad; but the fact is, we have got into a very interesting chat about the poems of Longfellow, and I am loath to leave the subject without finishing it."

"Well," replied his tormentor, "I don't know what subject you are loath to leave, although I dare-say I could easily guess"—glancing slyly at her cousin. "Nor do I know much about Longfellow; but one thing I do know, and that is, that you are a very lazy fellow."

"Come along, Mr Poind," she said, briskly, taking that gentleman's arm. "Let us leave them to ponder over 'Hiawatha,'" and turning her head sharply round as they were at the door, she gave a provoking look at the solitary pair on the ottoman, as much as to say—"Longfellow, indeed! I know what the fellow longs for."

Before going out, Mrs M'Corkscrew, like an economical woman, as she was, had lowered the lamps, so

that a dim, religious light, pervaded the drawing-room. The lovers, therefore, felt themselves doubly alone, and indulged in all the *abandon* attendant upon conscious seclusion.

"My dear Adam," fondly exclaimed the loving Flora, "I'm so sorry that matters have not gone as favourably as we could have wished, but Mr M'Cringer has assured me that Mr Poind will put everything to rights. He understands all about these cases."

"I sincerely hope so," said Sneaker.

It is right to state that Miss Flora Letitia M'Cork-screw was a woman of no common parts. She had received an excellent education, had a highly cultivated mind, and considerable literary taste. She had read extensively, and was passionately fond of poetry. It is not an uncommon thing, however, for women of this stamp to bestow their affections upon such creatures as Sneaker, particularly if they fancy that their tastes and feelings are akin. Mr Sneaker certainly did make "some pretensions to poetry." He had a very high idea of the merit of his own effusions, but, as we have seen, some people differed slightly from the author in regard to their value. The truth is that Sneaker appropriated the thoughts of others. He practised the art of electrotyping his own base metal with real silver. He certainly imposed upon

the unsuspecting Flora, but when a woman is willing to be deceived, the operation itself is half accomplished.

"How long will it be, my dear Flora, do you think, before this odious Ochtertyre can be got rid of?" he softly enquired.

Poor Flora fancied that the thoughts of her lover were directed to the happy day when her ardent wishes could be accomplished by the holy bands of matrimony. Alas! the Rev. Mr Sneaker was thinking only of his own presentation to the parish.

"Really, my dear, I cannot exactly say, but I will ask Mr Poind and Mr M'Cringer to-night."

"I wish you would," was the cool reply.

"I haven't shown you my last poetical effusion," she exclaimed, with animation.

"No, I think not," answered Sneaker, with an indifference which she did not notice.

"You recollect that beautiful French timepiece in aunt's drawing-room, with the burnished egg and the ray from the top playing upon it, and a cupid bursting from the broken shell. I never discovered that there was a motto on one of the scrolls until a day or two ago. The words are—'*Un rayon d'espoir fait le naître.*' I was always at a loss to understand what was the precise idea intended to be conveyed by the design until I read the inscription,

and I thought it so pretty, that I at once sat down and wrote a few lines about it. I should like to have your opinion of them. Will you allow me to repeat them to you?"

"Oh ! by all means," muttered Sneaker, his mind still dwelling upon the subject of the kirk and manse.

*So Miss Flora, with beaming eyes, recited the following lines :—

"UN RAYON D' ESPOIR FAIT LE NAÎTRE."

"So bore a glittering timepiece on its plinth
 Of golden fretwork, curiously wrought,
 Which caught the gaze, by which my musing eye
 Was led a captive to this quaint device.
 Pleased and yet puzzled by, I know not what,
 I asked myself, 'What can this writing mean ?
 A ray of hope has caused him to be born—
 Sprung from a gleam of hope—how can it be ?
 Who—what is born ? the quiddity lies there.'
 I pondered o'er the cabalistic line:
 Strange phantasm, to cause my wandering thought
 To concentrate its power on airy dreams,
 And fancies spun from golden pedestals !
 Yet there was something in the very words,
 And more in the occasion—but that's gone—
 Which breathed the essence of some secret thought;
 Some gleam of fancy, or some dream of love.
 To find out truth philosophy hath taught,
 Requires the steadfast musing of the mind

Upon the object sought to be divined ;
 But are we not hercyn sometimes at fault
 By too intently musing ? The orbit of *our* thoughts
 We thus would make the circle of the truth.
 Strange to suppose it cradled, buried here ;
 To dig for gold before the earth is probed,
 To prove that there is precious metal there !
 So ceased my mind to ponder o'er the line.
 But, glancing upward, 'mid the twisted wreaths
 Of golden flowers and frosted leafy buds,
 Ha ! bursts upon my mind the flashing truth.
 Behold ! a broken, burnished egg lies there,
 And from his incubus a rosy Cupid springs.
 While, darting from the throne of mighty Jove,
 A ray of glittering sunshine crowns his head.
 How emblematic of the birth of love !
 Yet 'tis not always so ; more frequent still
 We find it hatched, uncared for, and unknown.
 Bird-like, 'tis formed within the glowing breast,
 And feeds upon its own emotions deep,
 Till, bursting with its joys, too big for bounds,
 It breaks too soon, alas ! the virgin shell ;
 But, meeting with no kindred ray of hope,
 Shrinks from a world too cold to foster love."

Sneaker expressed himself highly pleased with this production, but his interest was raised to a much higher pitch, when, in the course of conversation, Miss M'Corkscrew happened to mention that an aunt of hers was dangerously ill, and that she herself was

down in her will for some five thousand pounds on her death.

"My dear Flora," said the pious young man, "I hope you will be long spared such an affliction as the death of your aunt."

. He was in the act of imprinting a kiss upon the not unwilling lips of his fair companion, when an unearthly yell burst from the other side of the room, apparently proceeding from a press, the door of which was suddenly opened, and a frightful figure rushed out in a state of frantic distraction, tossing its arms up in the direction of what appeared to be, its head, but a head such as no human being ever saw before.

The intended smack died away upon Sneaker's lips. He was in mortal terror, fancying it was the foul fiend himself, come to punish him for his hypocrisy. He was naturally a coward, and had believed in ghosts from his childhood. His hair stood on end as the figure came shrieking towards them.

Miss Flora, although somewhat frightened, retained her self-possession. She boldly asked—

"What's all this?"

A choking voice, which she recognised as that of young M'Snee, called out—

"Oh, Lord! I'm choked. Tak' the pat aff ma heed, for godsake!" Feeling assured that it was not

old Nick, Sneaker got up quickly, and getting hold of what turned out to be a large jar, lifted it with some difficulty off the young rascal's head. His face could not be distinguished, for it was completely covered with some thick, black substance, like treacle, which streamed down his body.

"Oh, ma nose, ma nose!" he roared out, putting his hand up to that facial protuberance. "It's broke—it's broke! What will I do?—what will I do?"

It turned out that the young scapegrace had seen one of the servants go into a store closet in the room, and observed that it was filled with a number of things which just suited his fancy, such as oranges, apples, preserves, *et cetera*. He had crept slyly in and had been enjoying himself to repletion, when, as ill-luck would have it, he was tempted to see what was in a large jar on the highest shelf. The jar contained a mixture which was used in the manufacture of porter, and was placed there for the purpose of settling. The youthful M'Snee having got a finger-lick of some of the stuff which had trickled over the side of the jar, and which rather tickled his palate, mounted upon a small barrel with the intention of taking it down; but as he could not reach further than the bottom, he began to pull it towards the edge of the shelf. The jar was very heavy, and its mouth was pretty wide. In pull-

ing it forward, the barrel slipped from under his feet, while the jar toppled right over, mouth downwards, and dropped so exactly over his devoted head, that it had all the appearance of a large hat bashed over his eyes. Very fortunate was it for the young rogue that nature had endowed him with a pretty considerably hooked nose, which arrested the further progress of the utensil, otherwise he would to a certainty have been suffocated. As it was, the streaming liquid besmeared him from head to foot, and probably, after all, his clock would have been wound up, had it not happened that our two lovers were philandering in the room. His nose was considerably damaged, however, and his mother, who, along with the rest of the guests, had just come in, declared in doleful accents that "it was a' oot o' joint." It was said that it never recovered its pristine beauty, but remained a warning to all thievishly inclined boys to beware of presses and jars.

This unfortunate accident broke up the party; and the guests, with the exception of Mr Poind, took their departure.

Sneaker lost no time in seeing his aunt, Mrs Pry, who, he knew, would be very anxious to learn the result of the dinner party, for she had built great hopes upon the fact of so many of the members of Presbytery having met at the festive board of one of

the objectors. Her dutiful nephew, therefore, made her acquainted with all that had passed. Mrs Pry would have been more than a woman if she could have kept this information to herself. She had a confidante of long standing in Mrs Alister Fillyerglass, and feeling fidgetty and uneasy until she could unburden her mind to somebody, she sent over for that worthy *commère* to discuss a cup of tea and scandal.

"Aweel, Mrs Fillyerglass," she quietly exclaimed, as the portly figure of her friend entered her small back parlour, "hoo are ye the nicht? 'Hae ye ony news?"

"Deed no, Mrs Pry, we a' expec tae get news frae you, ye ken. Whar sud we gang for news if no tae the Post-Offish? I hear that Mr Quaighorn, and Rory, the tailor, are keepin' better."

"Lord help us! Mrs Fillyerglass, that was surely an awfu' business."

"Nae doot o't, nae doot o't, Mrs Pry; they were maist purged tae death. The doctor thocht it was a veesitation o' the choleray murbus at first, an' canna' mak' oot yet what was wrang wi' them."

"But can they no tell theirsells?"

"Deed no; they say, as I'm tell't, that they gaed wi' a pair o' new breeks that the minister ordered, an' that M'Huistan took them ben an' gaed them some whusky, an' that in a wee they baith feelt their

wames leavin' them, an' they maist lost their senses. The tailor says that the minister was sitting fornent him, and that, tho' he got the troosers, he wadna' pey for them, and when he was gaun to tak' them awa', Huistan cam' an' pit him an' Quaighhorn oot o' the hoose, an' he says he canna' mind ony thing mair, for the nicht air clean took awa' his memory."

"But ye wud hear," said Mrs Pry, "o' the grand doings up by the ither nicht?"

"Ou ay," replied the other, "an' I hear," she added, in a confidential tone, "that a young freen o' yours is in a fair wey tae mak' a guid match."

"D'ye tell me sae, Mrs Fillyerglass? Tak' anither cup o' tea — that's Campbell Blair's best mixtur. A gar't the steward o' the Rob Roy bring't doon frae Glasgae. A maun gie ye a pickle o't hame wi' ye. It disna' need muckle maskin'."

"A'm verra much oblieged tae ye. They tell me that yer nevey, for a'll no hide wha a mean, is sure to get the pairish."

"A'm sure a wish he wud; but d'ye ken what a heerd the day? They say that the Rev. Mr M'Cringer has asked Mr Ochtertyre tae his manse an' tae preech in his kirk."

"Eh, michty! that surely canna' be, Mrs Pry," exclaimed the other in astonishment. "Ma guidman ay tell't me that Mr M'Cringer was sair against him."

"It's true enuch tho'," repeated the postmistress, "for my nevey tell't me this mornin'."

"An' what did he say aboot it?"

"Ou jist naething at a'. He didna' look the least flyed for't."

"D'y'e raily tell me sae? It's unco strange, a think."

"Awell, a'm sure I dinna' ken, but they'll hae their ain reasons for't, nae doot. A'se warrant things maun come tae a heed afore lang," she added, "for a heep o' letters hae been passing atween Mr Ochtertyre an' a Mr Gabby Garrempey, a writer in Embro'. Ye maunna speak a word aboot it, ye ken," she whispered, looking cautiously around.

"Losh pity me! Mrs Pry, I wad as sune eat aff ma wee finger."

"Weel, ye see, ane o' thae letters cam' open. They'd forgot tae pit a wafer on't, an' I jist thocht that a wud tak' a peep intil't; an' ye ken, Mr Garrempey's comin' doun here next week, an' he gies direc-shuns what's tae be dune. A canna' mind them the noo, but ma nevey took a copy o't, an' a jist pit a bit wafer on't, an' naebody 'll be the wiser."

"Wasna' that lucky, noo! It was jist providential."

"Dinna' tell yer guidman onything aboot it, for ye ken men sudna' know wuman's secrets."

"Hoots, awa'! Mrs Pry, d'ye think a'm daft?—na, na, it'll ne'er be telt by me."

"They tell me," resumed the other, "that this Mr Poind, wha's up in the big hoose, an' wha's tae ack for us, is a rale clever man, an' my nevey thinks he's thrawin' sheep's een at Miss M'Phillabeg. He says he heerd that whan they were oot walking the ither nicht, he was makin' love tae the lassie, an' that she seemed to be verra weel pleased wi' him."

"She's a steerin' hizzy," replied the other, "but disna' want for sense aithers. A think she's got a saft side for Mr Porter. A see her in the kirk gey an' aften looking at him in a wey that mak's me think there's something atween them."

In this way the worthy couple spent the evening, until Mrs Fillyerglass announced that it was time "tae gae hame an' gie ma guidman his supper." Notwithstanding her solemn promise, it is our painful duty to record that the worthy matron gave her husband, within the hour, a full, true, and particular account of all that had passed, and—a great deal more.

CHAPTER VIII.

EDINBURGH AND GLASGOW ECCLESIASTICAL LAWYERS—MESSRS HORN AND POIND, WRITERS, CANDLERIGGS, GLASGOW, AND MR GABBY GARREMPAY, S.S.C., HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH—THE REV. MR M'CRINGER TRIES TO MEASURE THE PRESENTEE'S TROWSERS, AND HIS POWERS OF WALKING—HUISTAN M'HUISTAN AND THE REV. DR BROWSER.

M'R M'CRINGER had not departed with the rest of the company, as it was arranged that he and Poind should spend the evening in the house of Sheepshanks, in order finally to adjust the objections. He also had it in view to carry out Poind's suggestions, by inviting the presentee to preach for him.

The day after the dinner-party, M'Cringer paid a visit to the presentee. Huistian received him with great civility, but was at a loss to understand the reason of the visit, for he knew M'Cringer to be hand and glove with the objectors. He at first supposed that he had called on some formal business connected with the meeting for moderating in the call, but again he thought that it might be something else, so he resolved to become an eaves-dropper a second time.

“How do you do, Mr Ochtertyre?” exclaimed M'Cringer, warmly, as he entered No. 3. “I hope



you are quite well. I just called in passing to say that it would be as well if you returned your certificate to Snuffmull to be certified. It should have been granted at a meeting of Presbytery, and ought to have been signed by the moderator and clerk, but you see it's only a certificate signed by the clerk himself."

The wily Presbyter made this an excuse for his call.

"I'm very much obliged to you, Mr M'Cringer. I quite see the force of what you say, and shall attend to it."

"You must be very dull here, my dear sir," sympathetically remarked the visitor. "Why don't you come and see some of us? I'm sure we would be glad to see you. In fact, you could do me a favour on Sunday next if you're not engaged. I foolishly promised Dr Brower to preach for him, relying upon having my own pulpit supplied by some of our brethren, but I have been disappointed. I have been trying to get assistance from the missionary at Brose Athole, but he has gone to Glasgow, and I'm at my wit's end."

"I shall be very happy, sir, to take your pulpit," said the unsuspecting presentee. Nothing will give me greater pleasure."

"You have relieved me from an unpleasant difficulty, Mr Ochtertyre, and I feel very much obliged

to you. I shall send in the gig on Saturday forenoon, so that you will be out in time for dinner, and we can have a pleasant walk over my parish."

After some further conversation, M'Cringer took his departure.

Huistan did not know what to make of all this. His suspicions were aroused, but he had no tangible grounds for them. He made some excuse for entering the room shortly afterwards, when the conversation turned upon this unexpected visit.

"I feel much obliged to Mr M'Cringer," said Mr Ochtertyre, "for pointing out an informality in my certificate from the Presbytery clerk of Snuffmull."

"Is there ony thing wrang wi't?" Huistan asked, in a dubious voice.

"Oh, yes, it should have been signed by the moderator at a meeting of Presbytery. He has also asked me to preach for him on Sabbath first, and is to send his gig for me on Saturday forenoon. He is to preach himself for Dr Browser."

"Ay, ay," muttered Huistan. "A thocht the doctor an' him wasna' sich guid freens. A'm gaun up tae the glebe the morn tae look at some young beasts o' his, an' it's like a'll hae a crack wi' him, for he mak's a dure bargain."

It soon became known in the village that the presentee was to preach in the parish of Ochonochree,

It was a puzzle to all but those in the secret how this came about, and several people began to think that the opposition was to be abandoned.

In the midst of the speculations upon this subject there arrived, by the Rob Roy steamer, Mr Gabby Garrempey, S.S.C., Edinburgh, whom the presentee had been advised to employ as his agent.

Mr Garrempey had been regularly trained to the law, and although not occupying a first position in the profession, had a large and pretty lucrative practice. He was a sharp practitioner, not over fastidious as to the class of cases he conducted, but he had a code of honour of his own, and seldom took advantage of a professional brother, unless he had been ill-treated himself, or it were of paramount importance to the interests of his client to do so. His accounts were what is called "pretty salt;" but he somehow managed to pass the auditor more successfully than most of his brethren. He was exacting in payment, but was known, in peculiar circumstances, to do a generous thing. Generally you might depend upon his word when he did give it, but he could economise the truth if the occasion required it, without positively telling a falsehood. He had sense enough to know, that telling a lie was about the worst thing a lawyer could do. In this respect, and indeed in every other, he was different from his opponent,

Poind. Garrempey had the advantage of a good education, received in the High School of Edinburgh, but had not connection, nor elevation of character enough, to secure what it is usual to call, respectable practice. He was, besides, rather fond of an extra tumbler. He did not go so far in that way, as Poind did in eating; for although the latter was certainly a glutton, Garrempey could not, by any means, be called a drunkard. He had been engaged in church cases more or less from his entering the office of Messrs M'Whibble and Wham, W.S.; he knew every turn and twist in such actions, whether proceeding upon a *fama clamosa et publica frequens*, or in the opposition to the settlement of a presentee. He was also thoroughly up in the mysteries of the Teind Court;—was at home in localities, chalders, and free and unexhausted teinds. He had successfully managed some cases for Huistan, notably the one between him and Puncheon, in the Court of Session, and it was upon the strong recommendation of the worthy publican, that he had been employed by the presentee.

Huistan, like most litigious individuals, was possessed with an immense admiration for a successful lawyer. It is the only species of hero-worship in which persons of that class ever indulge, and great, therefore, was the curiosity of Huistan, to see the man who had

done so well for himself, and who, he had no doubt, would do much for his *protégé*.

Garrempey was a man of about sixty years of age, stout, with a full, florid face, and quick, cunning, grey eye, a round glossy bald head, and rather *retroussé* nose, which usually held, in solution, a considerable quantity of Taddy's mixture, necessitating the frequent application of a brown pocket handkerchief. He always wore a white neckcloth, and frilled shirt, both of which furnished undeniable evidence of the existence of a servitude of nasal stillicide. A suit of rusty black, a beaver hat, and Blucher boots, completed his outer man. His appearance was what a snob would call, decidedly seedy, but Garrempey cared very little for outward appearances. A massive gold chain dangled from the watch pocket of his breeches, which were not fashioned with the smart front buttons and side pockets which adorn those worn by modern dandies. In consultation he had a habit of putting one leg over the other, and resting his elbow on the uppermost, with his silver snuff-box in his hand, which he tapped and opened when about to deliver an oracular opinion upon the question under discussion.

Garrempey was warmly received by Huistan, and was soon introduced to his rev. client. The former gave him a full account of all that had taken place in the parish, and also a particular description of

the parties who were taking the lead in the opposition. Huistan knew all and every thing about them; their motives, and hopes in the matter. He also went over the characters and conduct of their coadjutors, Quaighorn, Fillyerglass, and Smites. The members of Presbytery were also trotted out; the history and character of each and all of them duly related. Before this consultation, which lasted nearly three hours, came to an end, Garrempey was in possession of all the facts of the case, and had taken copious notes.

“If Mr M‘Cringer is the sort of man you say he is, Mr M‘Huistan, he must have some sinister object under this invitation to our client.”

“A doot it, a doot it, Mr Garrempey; but though a’ve been thinking a’ day, I canna’ weel see what the cratur’s aboot.”

“Have you any idea what the objections are to be ?” said Garrempey. “If we knew that, we might be able to guess.”

“Na,” replied Huistan, “they’re keepin’ that tae theirsells’ jist yet; but they hae a miserable writer body frae Glasgae wi’ them, makin’ them oot, a hear.”

“Oh, indeed ; who is he ?”

“They ca’ him Poind, I think.”

“Oh, I see, of Horn and Poind, writers ?”

“The same, a hae nae doot ; he’s a fearfu’ eater, a

was tauld, by ane o' Porter's servants, an' they say he's looking aifter a niece o' Mrs M'Corkscrew's."

While this conversation was going on, a letter was handed to Mr Ochtertyre, curiously folded, the wax of which had been evidently sealed with a thimble. After reading it, he handed it to Mr Garrempey, saying, "What can you make of that, sir?"

Garrempey hastily glanced over it, and quietly remarked, "I see it all now."

"What d'ye ye see?" eagerly exclaimed Huistan.

"I shall read the letter, and you can form your own opinion, Mr M'Huistan."

The letter, which was written in a very irregular hand, ran as follows:—

"Reverent and Dear Sur,

"This comes fur tae inforum you, that if ye gang tae Mr M'Cringer's hoose ye'd better tak' care o' yer troosers.

I am,

"YER WEEEL WISHER."

There was neither date nor signature.

"Weel, weel," sighed Huistan, "that beats a'l!" Starting up suddenly, he rushed to the head of the stair, and called out—

"Tonald, wha brocht that letter?"

"A callan frae the clachan," promptly replied Donald.

"Rin awa' aifter him, an' say that a hae tae gie him a saxpence. Be sure an' bring him back."

The boy was back in no time. Huistan took him into his own room.

"Ye were in a great hurry, ma wee man," said Huistan, kindly—"here's a saxpence for ye. A maun write an answer tae the letter, but a canna' mak' oot the name verra weel. Jist gie me the richt address for fear o' ony mistake."

"She tellt me no to say wha sent me," said the boy, timorously.

"Ou ay, a ken that, but she meent that ye werna tae tell strangers. D'ye no see that?"

"Weel, a daursay," said the boy.

"A maun write an answer," said Huistan, coaxingly; "an'a canna' mak' oot hoo tae spell her name in English. If ye wud jist say't in Gaelic, a could mak' it oot better."

"Seònaid Nic Gregair," said the boy, which, being interpreted, means Jess M'Gregor.

"Ou ay, jist sae, a can mak' it a' oot noo;" and giving the boy a huge piece of bannock and cheese, be told him that he could go.

Huistan having thus cleverly ascertained the name of the writer of the letter, at once rejoined his friends up stairs.

"Well, have you found out anything?" asked Garrempey.

"Yes," said Huistan, "A ken wha wrote the letter—it's ane o' Porter's servants. Her faither works tae me, an' a ken that she thinks an unco heep o' Mr Ochertyre, but, of coorse, she'll be feared to say that whar she's the noo."

"Couldn't we get her down here for half-an-hour?" said Garrempey. "I see she's aware of something that it would be important for us to know."

"A'll maun that easy enuch," said Huistan, confidently.

"I think you should also see Dr Browser, as you suggested a little ago; but I would not question him in such a way as would lead him to speak to M'Cringer about it. I think you should try to throw yourself in Mr M'Cringer's way, with one or two others, and bring the subject of Mr Ochertyre's going to preach for him up, and try if you can get him to say that he is to preach for Dr Browser. If it's a lie, we can make good use of it when the evidence comes up."

"I'll dae that, Mr Garrempey, I'll dae that. He'll no hae left the village yet; he's some sheep tae sell, an' a think a ken whaur tae fin' him."

"In the meantime," said Garrempey, "if you can spare me one of your men who knows the parish,

I'll take a stroll about to make myself acquainted with the localities."

"Tonald's your man, Mr Garrempey; he kens aboot the pairish an' the case as weel's me."

We shall leave Mr Garrempey to pursue his walk, and follow the operations of Huistan. His first care was to fall in with Mr M'Cringer, having secured two supporters upon whom he could rely, to come up when he had got the rev. gentleman into conversation. He was not long in finding the incumbent of Ochon-ochree, whom he saw emerging from the dwelling of the estimable Quaighorn, who by this time had recovered from the effects of his late misadventure.

Huistan passed M'Cringer at first with a nod, but turning suddenly, he said,

"By the bye, Mr M'Cringer, hae ye ony sheep tae sell the noo?"

The latter at once looked round. He knew that Huistan was generally liberal in his price, and quickly answered,

"Oh, yes, Mr M'Huistan, I can give you a score."

"Weel," said Huistan, looking towards his friends, "A selt four score tae Archie Campbell there, thinking that a had them, but ma shepherd says that he wants twa dozen tae mak' up the lot, as he selt as many tae a Glasgae butcher."

By this time the parties had come up.

"Well, I think I can give you the two dozen, Mr M'Huistan, and I'm sure we wont quarrel about the price."

"Weel," said the other, "A'll trive ower in a day or twa an' look at them. Wull that dae, Archie?" said he, addressing one of the parties he had previously spoken to.

"Ou, ay, it'll dae verra weel, but a wad need them on Monday first."

"Weel, if a cud gang on Saturday, a wud trive them ower on Monday."

"I have it," said little McCringer; "just come over with Mr Ochtertyre, he's to preach for me on Sunday."

"Ou, ay, he telt me that ye were gatin tae preech for Dr Browser."

"Yes, the doctor has asked me to preach for him, and Mr Ochtertyre has kindly consented to supply my pulpit. If you'll take pot luck with us, I'll be very glad. You can look at the sheep, and I've some young beasts that you might take a fancy-to.—I'm sorry I can't ask you to stay over Sunday, as there are plasterers at work in the only bed-room I could offer you."

"Oh, a couldna' think o' that, Mr McCringer. A can tell Tonald tae meet me wi' the gig at the toll."

"That will do very well, I shall send in for you at eleven o'clock on Saturday.—Good bye."

"Ye heerd that," said Huistan, addressing his friends.—"He said Dr Browser asked him tae preech for him. Noo, as ye valoo oor cause, say naething aboot this; come awa', an' we'll hae a bit gill ower the heed o't."

Next morning Huistan yoked his gig and drove over to the parish of Blairorgan, to call upon the Rev. Dr Browser. The worthy doctor was a man of very stiff and dignified manners. He had seen good society in his youth; indeed it was said by some people, that he had been an officer in the army. At all events, he had for several years held a charge in connection with the Church of Scotland in England, and there was a refinement both in his manner and appearance which contrasted very favourably with the roughness of the majority of his co-presbyters. He was passionate, however, and easily offended, and not very ready to forgive. In consequence, he was continually in hot water. He generally took a side and kept it, through thick and thin. He was no friend of McCringer's, although he was obliged to exchange the ordinary courtesies of a gentleman with him. He received Huistan very kindly, in fact he was rather a favourite more by token that he always got from him the best price for his stock. After a bargain as

to some beasts, had been concluded, to the satisfaction at least, of the doctor, and the everlasting usquebaugh had been placed upon the table, the latter asked,

"Any news in your parish? I hear there's to be an opposition to the presentee."

"Ou ay, there's a talk o' that. He's staying in ma hoose, an' am sure a quieter or mair civiller man, or a mair pious ane, ne'er entered a pulpit."

"I have heard good accounts of him," said the doctor, "from a friend of mine in Snuffmull. I must go over and see him one of these days, before his call is moderated in."

"It wud be verra kind o' ye, doctor. He has nae freens except mysel'. What they ca' the aristocracy o' the parish is a' against him."

"Aristocracy!" muttered the doctor, with contempt. "The aristocracy of *Bœotia*."

"O' what did ye say, doctor?" said Huistan.

"Never mind, Huistan, it's nothing but a word. Tell Mr Ochtertyre that I'll drive over and see him next week."

Huistan now resolved to go cautiously to work to find out whether McCringer had been stating the truth as to the preaching. So he said—

"There's a Mr Garrempey come doun frae Embro' to stay wi' us. I advised Mr Ochtertyre tae consult him, as the opposite pairty hae a writer frae

Glasgae gaun through the pairish. He's a rale clever man, Mr Garrempey."

"Oh, I know him well," said the doctor, smiling ; "the very man for a church case."

"Aweel, we were jist thinking," said Huistan, slowly, "to drive ower on Sunday first tae hear ye preech. Mr Garrempey said it was a lang time since he had heerd you, an' that was in ane o' the city churches in Embro."

"I'll be very glad if you do ; and you can both stay and take your dinner with me. Mrs Browser and the family are away at Bridge of Allan, so I'm quite alone."

"Then ye'll be preeching yersel, doctor ?"

"Of course I will. What makes you ask that question ?"

"A'm feart a maun be confusing things," said Huistan, "but it's running in ma heed that somebody said that ye were ta hae a supply on Sabbath."

"Nonsense, nonsense ! you must be thinking of some one else."

"Jist that," said Huistan. "Aweel, doctor, guid bye, an' we'll be sure to be ower in time for the afternoon discoorse."

So the indefatigable Huistan drove home, chuckling at the success of his mission. He had all but secured the doctor, and had found out M'Clinger.

CHAPTER IX.

A LAWYER'S PLAN FOR DEFEATING A CLERICAL STRATAGEM—
THE PRESENTEE'S POWERS OF WALKING TESTED—MEETING
OF ELDERS—M'CRINGER'S DISAPPOINTMENTS—DINNER AT
DR BROWSE'R'S MANSE.

HUISTAN lost no time in acquainting Garrempey with the result of his enquiries.

"You've done very well, indeed, Mr M'Huistan," said the lawyer.

"There's just one thing, however, you must manage. You'll require to get hold of the girl who wrote the letter."

"She's tae be here the nicht. A forgot tae tell ye that a ca'd on her faither on ma wey back. The haill faimily's strongly in favour o' Mr Ochtertyre."

The girl in due time made her appearance, and was thoroughly precognosced. It was ascertained, that the purpose of inviting the presentee to preach for M'Cringer, was merely to get up evidence against him. There was no doubt that Mr Ochtertyre had a halt, but so slight, that it was not much noticed. It had not, however, escaped the eyes of M'Cringer. Garrempey also ascertained that it was intended to

send parties to Snuffmull to get up evidence there. It was arranged that Jess should give intimation of the time when these parties were to depart on their mission, and to inform Huistan, if possible, who they were.

After she had gone, a consultation took place.

"Now, Mr Ochtertyre," said Garrempey, tapping his box, and inhaling a large pinch of his favourite Taddy, "I see through the tactics of our opponents. How far is it—addressing Huistan—to the manse of Ochonochree?"

"Fifteen miles."

"Can you walk that distance, Mr Ochtertyre?"

"Certainly, and fifteen more."

"All right. You can do the same, Mr M'Huistan?"

"Ou ay, an' a bittock mair."

"Well, then, I'll tell you what you must do. You're going there about the sheep I think, on Saturday. Get Donald to go with you; he's intelligent and discreet. Instead of waiting for M'Clinger's gig, take shanks' naggie for it, and be there by twelve o'clock. If you meet the gig, say that there are too many of you, and you haven't far to go—that you'll just walk on. That'll take the wind out of M'Clinger's sails."

"Do you think I should preach for him, Mr Garrempey, after what has transpired?"



"By all means—and be sure, Mr M'Huistan, that you have a good number of our supporters in M'Cringer's church on Sunday."

"A'll see tae that, Mr Garrempey, never fear."

"And, Mr Ochtertyre," added the latter, with a grim smile, "recollect the girl's advice, and take care of your breeks. Don't keep me waiting for you long, Mr M'Huistan," he significantly added, "for Saturday night's always a dull one with me, and I don't care to mix my tumbler alone."

"Ou, a'll be back in guid time for the toddy, Mr Garrempey, dinna be feared; an' ye ken," rubbing his hands, "we maun be moderate, for we hae tae be wi' the doctor on Sunday. Tonald 'll look aifter gettin' the folk tae gang till the kirk in Ochonochree. He'll herd them like a colley dowg."

On Saturday morning, accordingly, the trio departed for M'Cringer's manse. It was a fine morning, and they got over the ground briskly. They were all good walkers, and, as expected, they met M'Cringer's gig. On telling the lad that they would walk on, he drove forward, as he had to get some things in the village. Arriving at the manse, they found M'Cringer and two of his elders sitting together in the parlour. The former could not conceal his chagrin, when he found how matters stood.

"Confound it!" he said to himself, "this is very

unlucky. What on earth could have persuaded them to walk?"

Huistan at once divined what was passing through his mind, and said,

"Ye'll be surprised tae see us here sae sune, Mr M'Cringer, but the fac' is, a couldna sleep weel last nicht, an' a got up sooner than ordinar, an' as it was sic a fine mornin', a jist thocht we wad hae a bit walk, as Mr Ochtertyre hasna' been oot sae muckle o' late wi' bad weather, an'," he added, as he saw M'Cringer looking suspiciously out of the window at Donald, "a jist brocht Tonald wi' us, in case we micht mak' a bargain the day, as he cud trive ower the sheep."

This seemed to reassure M'Cringer, and to put him into good humour.

After introducing the elders, M'Cringer produced his bottle, and a lively conversation ensued.

"My elders, Mr Ochtertyre, have paid me a visit to arrange as to which of them will attend the meeting next week for moderating in your call."

M'Cringer's real object, as we have seen already, was to have them as witnesses to speak to the presen-tee's powers of walking.

"It's a fashious thing, Mr Ochtertyre," remarked one of these worthies, "tae gae sic distances to attend meetings; a hope there'll be nae mair o' them."

The rogue never intended to go at all, and was as anxious as his leader to see an opposition got up.

After some further conversation, they departed, M'Cringer wisely judging that in this instance at least, it would be better to let sleeping dogs lie. Accordingly they all, with the exception of the elders, proceeded to the sheep fank, and examined M'Cringer's stock. Huistan, after a careful inspection, managed adroitly to put off making an immediate bargain.

They then proceeded to examine the black cattle, and here Huistan, who really required some, purchased two, making by the way, a very fair bargain. After dinner, and a few tumblers, Huistan took his departure, having previously arranged that his own gig should take up himself and his faithful henchman, Donald Frisheal, on the way.

"A think we haenna dune jist sae bad for the last twa-three days, Tonald?"

"No sae bad, at a'," laconically replied the Frisheal.

"Did you'll saw that M'Cringer didna daur tae ask Mr Ochtertyre tae walk the day? Thae twa rascals o' elders was there for nae ither purpose but tae be witnesses agin him."

"Mind noo, Tonald," he continued, after a pause, "what ye've tae dae the morn. Ye'llhae tae see as mony o' oor freens as ye can, the nicht, an' tell them," he

added slyly, “that they’re a’ tae come tae oor hoose whan they get back frae the kirk, an’ ye needna’ spare the whusky, only ye’ll min’ the Lord’s-day, an’ dinna let them get fou’,—jist a bit refreshment, ye ken, some bread an’ cheese.”

“Ou, ay, a’ll min’ that.”

“Ye ken, Mr Garrempey an’ me’s gaun ower tae tak’ oor denner wi’ the doctor, an’ we’ll no be back afore ten o’clock. Ye can tell them tae pit Peg in the kig, as she’s gey canny, an’ kens the road. A’m no sae guid noo at triving in the dark, an’ the doctor’s whusky ’s unco strong.”

“Ay, ay,” replied Donald.

The position of Mr Ochtertyre was anything but pleasant. He found himself the guest of a man whom he now knew to be a secret and unscrupulous enemy. He would have given anything to be sitting in his quiet little room, in the hostelry of his friend, Huistan; but Garrempey had recommended him to go through with the work, and he resolved to do it. It was very difficult for him, however, to keep up anything like a cheerful conversation with an individual whom, in his heart, he could only despise. He would have been more than human could he have felt otherwise.

The lad, by and bye, returned with the gig, and M’Cringer went to the door. He came back smiling,

holding in his hand, what appeared to be a note, and said,

"I find I won't have to preach for the doctor after all—he has changed his mind, so I shall not be under the necessity of leaving you by yourself. What do you say to take a turn out?" The sly fox saw that there was some appearance of rain.

"I have no objection," replied the other; so away they went. M'Cringer walked pretty sharply, with the view, doubtless, of getting as far from shelter as possible, before the shower began. He led the way over the most rugged and marshy part of his parish, and the ill-assorted pair trudged on, talking now and then upon indifferent subjects. They would be about four or five miles from the manse when the rain began to fall in torrents.

"I think we must turn now," observed M'Cringer. "I'm sorry we didn't think of bringing umbrellas. Who could have thought that it would rain like this, after such a fine day?"

"Oh! I'm quite used to this sort of thing, Mr M'Cringer. Lochspelding's a rainier parish than yours, and a good deal rougher, so far as I can judge."

"Hum. It can hardly be so bad as the parishes about here. Don't you feel tired? I hope you haven't strained your leg. I thought I saw you limping a little."

"Not in the least tired, I assure you," quietly replied the other, "I could walk back to Porterbier, and further, if necessary. I think we might take this burn instead of going round about," and with a short race he cleared a broad and deep ditch, with an agility that fairly took the breath from M'Cringer—more particularly as the feat was observed by his man, Thomas, who had just made his appearance with the gig to take them home. By this time, however, both pedestrians were pretty well wet through.

On getting home, M'Cringer lost no time in setting to work.

"Come up stairs, Mr Ochtertyre, and I'll shew you your room; I'm going to change my clothes, and I think you had better do the same," he added, in his blandest manner.

"It's not worth while," said his guest, "as we'll be going to bed soon; besides, I have not brought any change with me."

"Tut, tut! my dear sir, never mind that. I can supply you from my own wardrobe in a minute. It's a very dangerous thing to sit with wet clothes: you'll be sure to catch cold, and I should be so sorry if you got it while with me. Be persuaded—you will be hoarse to-morrow to a certainty, if you don't, and I want you to make a good appearance before my parishioners."

"No, thank you, I really do not like to trouble you, I am quite accustomed to wet. It never does me any harm."

"Well, well, a wilfu' man maun hae his way, as the saying is," said M'Cringer, hardly able to conceal his mortification.

"This is your bed-room, Mr Ochtertyre," he added, in a voice almost rude with suppressed rage.

"Just so," quietly remarked the other, and after looking in, he walked slowly down stairs again.

"Confound it!" muttered M'Cringer, when he got into his own room, "every thing seems to be running counter to our plans in this matter. He cannot have any suspicion of our intentions, and yet we seem to be check-mated at every move; but he will have no objection, at all events, to having his trowsers dried when he goes to bed. It's the only chance."

By and bye the time arrived for family worship. In the interval, M'Cringer had endeavoured to make the bottle go round as quickly as possible, with the idea, no doubt, of putting his guest in a merry mood, but he was only successful in producing that effect upon himself. The presentee, at all times an abstemious man, was thoroughly on his guard.

It is usual to ask a ministerial visitor to lead the family worship on such occasions as the one in question, and M'Cringer took especial care to place his

chair at a convenient distance behind his guest, where he could have a full view of his locomotive outfit. Do what he would, he could not keep his eyes off the legs. He fancied he saw distinctly that one was shorter than the other. No! he could not be deceived; the right ankle *was* considerably larger than the left. In the course of his prayer, the presentee used the words "the days of our lives are few and short"—"Very short indeed," involuntarily muttered M'Cringer, his eyes and thoughts fixed only upon the stout little pair of stumps before him; and he sighed, but only to think that their muscular flexors and extensors enabled their owner to walk some twenty miles, and to leap a burn which he himself would not have faced, even when he was a youth.

It was now time to retire, and M'Cringer felt that the supreme effort must be made. The toddy he had taken had renewed his confidence, somewhat shaken after his first repulse.

"I'll see you to your room, Mr Ochtertyre," he said at last, with some hesitation.

"Oh, never mind; I'll find my way."

"No, no; I can't think of allowing you to do that. Mary," he called, addressing one of the servants, "bring candles."

So they went upstairs.

"Mary," he said again, and there was a slight

tremour in his voice, as if the fear of being unsuccessful had affected his articulation, "Mr Ochtertyre will give you his clo—clo—his trowsers to dry at the kitchen fire, as they are very damp and dirty with mud, and you'll see and have them well brushed in the morning."

"Yes, sir."

"Never mind, Mary," mildly interposed Mr Ochtertyre, "they're quite dry now. I can get them brushed in the morning if it's necessary."

"My dear sir!" almost imploringly interrupted M'Cringer, "they'll not be decent to-morrow, unless thoroughly dried and brushed, and, of course, your appearance will be well scanned. On my account, as well as your own, I think you ought to have your clothes in decent order."

"They'll be all right, I have no doubt," coolly replied the other. "Good night."

So saying, he quietly closed the door.

The discomfited M'Cringer, as he stood with the candle in his hand, looking now at the door through which his intended victim had disappeared, now at the servant, who stood, not knowing what to make of it, would have been a fine study for a painter. Excited with rage, drink, and disappointment, he could not speak, but dashing the candle on the floor, he hurriedly sought his own apartment.

It may easily be imagined that the breakfast-table next morning was not a very cheerful one. Consummate master as he was of duplicity, M'Cringer was not able wholly to conceal his disappointment. What would Sheepshanks, Puncheon, and Poind say to it? With every chance in his favour, he had failed in two of the most important points in their case. In fact, he had actually given the presentee the opportunity, not merely of showing that he was a first-rate walker, and could endure wet and fatigue, but he was also giving him the further chance of influencing the minds of the people by preaching just on the eve of the moderation of his call. He had serious thoughts of trying to prevent him preaching at all, and of reading an old sermon of his own. But whether it was that he had been in a manner cowed by his successive defeats, or that the reaction arising from the indulgence of the previous evening had unnerved him, he had not the courage to carry out this intention.

The forenoon service consisted, as usual, merely of a lecture, which seemed to be received with satisfaction by the congregation. M'Cringer was astonished to see his church almost crammed, and his chagrin was, in consequence, proportionally increased. In the afternoon it was crowded almost to suffocation. Hundreds of people from the neighbouring parishes flocked to hear the presentee, Ochonochree being the most

central part of the district. So numerous was the attendance, that a large number were obliged to remain outside, listening at the open windows.

The presentee chose for his text Amos, 3d Chap. and 3d verse—"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

On hearing the text, M'Cringer, according to Donald, who was present, and who, as we have already mentioned, was deep in the secrets of the case, gave a sudden start, and looked uneasily about, thinking, like all guilty minds, that everybody would suspect the meaning he himself drew from it.

The sermon was excellent. Probably the preacher had been wound up to a point unusually favourable to bitter and scorching eloquence, by the consciousness of the injuries attempted to be inflicted upon him, for Donald and others declared that they had never heard a more powerful "discoorse." Not a whisper was heard. There could be no doubt in the mind of any one acquainted with the part M'Cringer had played in this matter, that much that was said would suit his case exactly, and he thought so himself.

At the conclusion of the service, and on leaving the vestry, Mr Ochtertyre was warmly greeted by several of those who had been present. He had evidently made a very favourable impression upon

all who heard him, and who were not immediately under the influence of his enemies.

"Are ye gaun back tae the manse, sir?" enquired Donald.

"I think not; I'll rather walk home with you."

M'Cringer, anxious to put a stop to the demonstration, came up, and said hurriedly—

"Dinner will be waiting us, Mr Ochtertyre."

"I think I'll just walk back to Porterbier, Mr M'Cringer, it's such a fine day, and I feel I would be all the better for the walk."

M'Cringer's object was, if possible, to prevent the presentee from mixing with the people, for a very considerable number of them had to go the same way. Here was an opportunity that the presentee could not have again, as his call was to be moderated in so soon. It would be contrary to all rule for him to seek to mix with the people himself; but he could not be said to have sought this chance, and M'Cringer looked upon it as another advantage thrown in his way.

"Well, well," he said, bitterly, "take your own way, you'll perhaps regret it."

"I have done nothing that I require to regret, Mr M'Cringer. If you can conscientiously say as much for yourself, it will be all the better for you some day. Good bye."

So they parted, each of them feeling that there was now an end to ceremony.

But let us return to Huistan and Garrempey. These two characters found their way, in good time, to Blairorgan ; and, after having listened to a very elegant discourse from the doctor, they sat down to an equally elegant dinner, for the reverend gentleman was a decided epicure.

“ Well, Garrempey,” he said, after the cloth was removed, apparently forgetting that he had said it two or three times before, “ I’m very glad to see that Mr Ochtertyre’s in such experienced hands as yours. I think you must have been engaged in every church case of importance within the last thirty or forty years.”

“ I *have* been in a good many of them. I remember when Jeffrey, Cockburn, Moncrieff, and others of the same standing, used to plead before the Assembly, but somehow it strikes me that rising men don’t care much about appearing now.”

“ How do you account for that?”

“ Well, there are various reasons. In the first place, the fees are not generally thought to be adequate, but I don’t think that’s the real cause. There is a strong feeling at the bar that there’s very little chance of getting substantial justice from the Assembly ; that, in fact, it’s a mere toss up whether a man will be successful or not, whatever the merits of the case

may be, or however much trouble may be bestowed upon it. Then, it's so much in the nature of a popular and unruly meeting, that counsel are liable to vexatious, and frequently impertinent interruptions. Besides, they feel that they are domineered over by your Procurator, who, while affecting to sum up with impartiality, becomes, in almost every case, an advocate for one side or the other. He makes the most of his brief tenure of authority as a judge in the Assembly *en revanche*, for his being nobody the rest of the year."

"There's a good deal of truth in what you say, no doubt," replied the doctor; "but the Assembly is not a bad school for a young advocate."

"I grant that; but I was speaking of men well up at the bar."

"I remember," said the doctor, "one occasion when Jeffrey appeared. If I mistake not, it was his first case in the Assembly, and the students cheered him. There was a great row."

"Do you recollect," asked Garrempey, "when Dr Andrew Thomson gave Dean of Faculty Hope such a drubbing? I think it was in the little Dunkeld case."

"I do. It was admirable. The Dean, in the course of his remarks, was ridiculing forms, and, if I remember rightly, the doctor, addressing the

Moderator, made use of the words—‘Sir, I love forms, for they are the essential safeguards of liberty and justice.’”

“Yes, I think he did; but things are very much changed now.”

The evening passed very pleasantly in reminiscences of this kind, and Garrempey had the satisfaction of enlisting the doctor’s sympathy, and getting a promise of support for his client.

He and Huistan arrived safe and sound at the “Inns” in Porterbier, Peg having performed her part of the undertaking with credit to herself and satisfaction to her driver.

CHAPTER X.

MODERATING IN A CALL — SCENES THEREAT — DIAMOND CUT
DIAMOND BETWEEN A GAELIC AND AN ENGLISH SERMON—
A CLERICAL CHAMPION APPEARS FOR THE PRESENTEE.

THE eventful day for moderating in the call at length arrived, and great was the stir created in the parish. Vehicles of all descriptions came pouring into the village of Porterbier. Parties arrived from considerable distances to be present at the ceremony. Hucksters, and travelling dealers in whisky and lemonade, soda water, and gingerbeer, repaired to the scene of action as to a fair. Everything, in short, bespoke a holiday. As the various clergymen and elders made their appearance in cumbrous gigs, or mounted upon shaggy Galloways, they came in for a fair share of remarks from the gaping groups at all the available corners from which the calvacade could be seen.

M‘Cringer was one of the first who appeared.

“ Eh, sirs, the day !” exclaimed Mrs Pry, to some of her neighbours, at the door of the Post Office, “ but Mr M‘Cringer’s no looking weel.”

In truth the rev. gentleman was in anything but good case.



He stopped at M'Groggy's, where he saw his friends Sheepshanks, Puncheon, and others, standing along with that redoubtable personage, Mr Sharper Poind, and his friend, the Rev. Mr Sneaker.

"Come away, Mr M'Cringer," exclaimed Sheepshanks, cheerily, as if to infuse some spirit into his friends, who were not looking by any means hearty. "Got your letter. Can't help the turn matters have taken."

"No," said M'Cringer, dismounting from his nag, "It is not in mortals to command success."

The party then adjourned to M'Groggy's large room, and after the inevitable dram had been called for and drank, they resolved themselves into a committee of ways and means.

"There's no help," gravely observed Poind, "for what's past. We must state our objections to-day, and can set vigorously about getting up evidence afterwards. I have written to my clerk, Timothy Casey, to come here by the first steamer. If you can let me have two persons who know the country, I will send him along with them to Snuffmull, because, I believe, we shall be able to get evidence there of considerable importance."

"That should be done at once," said Puncheon. "I can give them letters of introduction to friends in Snuffmull, who will lend every assistance. They will

be able to inform them of the presentee's whole history from his youth upwards. I understand, from a letter which I received the other day, that he got his leg broken when a young man, that he has been frequently heard to complain of pain in it while walking; and that he is not able to endure much bodily fatigue. In fact, we could, I daresay, get hold of the medical man who attended his family."

"And, then," said Poind, with a chuckle, "of course, we can put him in the box himself, and get all we want out of him."

"Can you do that?" asked Sheepshanks, doubtfully.

"Of course, we can. If you've been attending to church cases, you must have seen that presentees have been subjected to very rigid examinations. We shall have no difficulty, Mr M'Cringer, in this matter, I hope, with your Presbytery?" he said, with a knowing wink.

"None, whatever," replied the other, who by this time looked in rather better humour, from the combined effects of potent usquebaugh, and the hopeful air which was now thrown into the business.

"Besides the objections purely personal to the presentee," resumed Poind, "we shall, of course, have to attack his sermons and services, and while we will require a good many of the ordinary members of the

congregation to give evidence upon these points, it would be desirable to have parties of education, and of a higher position, to strengthen their testimony."

"I think you heard the discourses, Mr Sneaker?" he added.

"Oh, yes, and if I can be of any use, you may rely upon me."

"By the bye," said Poind, again addressing Sneaker, "have you the copy of that letter from Garrempey to the presentee?"

"Yes; but of course you will say nothing about it. I don't like my handwriting to be seen."

"I'll take care of that, Mr Sneaker; I shall make a copy myself, and destroy yours."

Poind then read the letter, which pointed out to the presentee what it was necessary should be done.

"You see," observed Poind, "what Garrempey says about the call being left with the parish schoolmaster for signature after the meeting to-day. It's the usual thing, but I understand that he's favourable to the presentee, and could, of course, give facilities for its being signed previously to being returned to the clerk of Presbytery."

"We must keep it out of his hands, if possible," observed M'Cringer. "What do you say to Smites? He lives at a considerable distance from Porterbier,

where the majority of those favourable to the presentee reside, and could have occasion to be pretty often out of the way."

"Eh?" said he, looking at Puncheon.

"If you can manage it," replied the latter, "Smites is the man. Of course, he'll do anything for us."

"It must be done very delicately, however," said M'Cringer, "for I'm not quite sure that we are entitled to pass over the parish schoolmaster, unless for very strong reasons; and, unfortunately, we can only say that he seems to have a favourable opinion of the presentee."

"Oh! we can hit upon some reason for proposing Smites," said Poind. "You must bring as many objectors forward to-day as possible, for it's doubtful if any can be offered afterwards. At all events, it is better to have all your forces mustered now."

"We are attending to that," said Sheepshanks. "I hope Quaighorn has not been sparing of the whisky. The fellows were to be all mustered in the malt-room, and the women are to be up to breakfast in the barn. I think one of us should go and see that all's right."

"The hoor o' meetin's twa, a think," said Stirk. "A'll tak' a stap up an' see that ma men and women's there. Mony o' the people canna' sign their names," he added. "Who'll look aifter that?"

"The Moderator," said M'Cringer, "will see to it. Bring you up your supporters, and we'll see to the signing."

In the meantime Garrempey and Huistan had not been idle. They had gathered their friends together, and resolved that the call should be numerously signed. The shepherd left his flock, and the hind his cattle. The ploughman hastily unyoked his team, and as the hour of two approached, a continuous stream of persons poured in the direction of the old parish church, where the important meeting was to be held. The curtain was now to be raised upon the first act of this clerical drama, and no crowd ever rushed with more eagerness to a new play, than did the parishioners of Veto to the doors of their church, to assist at the opening scene of this, to them, singular representation.

The church, as may be expected, was very soon filled. Many had to stand upon the stairs, and outside of the building—the windows having been opened to allow them to see and hear. The minute of the proceedings will explain shortly what took place. It is usually the same in every case. It does not, however, record the scenes which are enacted in the church, the angry feelings, the squabblings of the rev. members of court among themselves, nor their unseemly contentions with the advocate. We say *the* advocate, because, so far as

we have ever seen, one counsel is pretty sure to have everything material his own way, while the other has to fight an up-hill and heart-breaking battle with the majority of the Presbytery, and especially with one or two rabid, bull-headed individuals, who make it a rule to take an almost invariable lead against him. There is, independent of more powerful and less pardonable motives, a strong desire on the part of clergymen, sitting as a court, to bully and put down one or other of the practitioners who appear before them, and they are generally arrogant and overbearing in proportion to the absurdity of the positions they are maintaining. The ignorance, pedantry, and sententiousness of some of those who thus rush to combat often against law and justice, and not unfrequently against common sense, are so appalling to a lawyer, who has the misfortune to appear in a church court for the first time, that his natural impulse leads him to quit it in disgust. Often nothing but the strongest sense of duty to his client prevents him from doing so. He gets used, however, after a time, to the atmosphere of the court, and if he will only exercise patience, he will soon find that the parsons, in their blind eagerness to thwart him at every point, will, sooner or later, land themselves in scrapes which may possibly affect their own pockets. When their eyes become opened to this contingency, the bullying

tone is lowered with remarkable speed, and some discreet presbyter is generally prevailed upon to become an internuncio for the establishment of amicable relations.

The minute of meeting proceeded as follows:—

“AT VETO, and in the parish church thereof, this
— day of — 18— years.”

“This day, the Presbytery of Dunderhead, having met conform to appointment, was constituted. Sederunt—Rev. Dr Pompeius Browser, of the parish of Blairorgan, Rev. Lauchlin Mackintrowsers, of the parish of Lochabernomore; Rev. Alister M‘Cringer, of the parish of Ochonochree, Moderator, *pro tem.*; Rev. Caleb Bouncer, of the parish of Ivirkip-himout; Rev. Whymper M‘Snee, of the parish of Gilliecallum; Rev. Ebenezer Sneckdraw, of the parish of Brose Athole; Rev. Teevish M‘Sneevish, of the parish of Sneeshan; Rev. Havral Clash, of the parish of Clavers; Rev. Inkhorn Skirleywhitter, clerk of Presbytery.

“Maccullamore Quaighhorn, }
“Alister Fillyerglass, } Elders.

“The minutes of last meeting were read and approved of. The edict, intimating Mr Fergus Ochtertyre’s appointment to preach in the parish church of Veto was returned, certified as having been duly executed. It was reported by Messrs M‘Cringer,

. Clash, and M'Sneevish, that the presentee had fulfilled these appointments, and that they were present, as appointed by the Presbytery, on the last of these occasions, and had received the manuscripts of his sermons delivered upon the said occasions at the conclusion of his last sermon. The same were duly doquetted.

“The Rev. Mr McCringer, as Moderator, *pro tempore*, then ascended the pulpit, and preached in Gaelic, from Proverbs, chapter xxvi, verse 7, and afterwards the Rev. Dr Brower preached in English from Psalm cxlvii, verse 10.”

It may be here explained that it is the rule that the Moderator of the Presbytery should preach the sermon or sermons upon the occasion of moderating in a call, but the Rev. Mr M'Slykey had intimated that he could not attend, upon the ground of being unwell, the truth being that he was unwilling to do it. The duty therefore devolved upon M'Cringer. He had forgotten neither the text nor the application of the discourse delivered by the presentee in the parish church of Ochonochree, nor the unfortunate result of his invitation, and, therefore, he had determined to “improve” the present occasion, by causing the presentee to regret having so unceremoniously deserted his Sunday diet.

The words of his text were—“The legs of the lame are not equal; so is a parable in the mouth of fools.”

The intended objections had been pretty well ventilated by this time, and it was generally known how matters stood between M'Cringer and his *quondam* guest. There could be no doubt in the mind of any one aware of this of the drift of the sermon, for allusions were made to the "circumstances and condition of the parish," as they are called in church law parlance, with reference to its special requirements in the shape of a pastor, which evidently applied to the supposed disabilities of the presentee.

M'Cringer left the pulpit with the air of a man perfectly satisfied with having achieved something which would meet with the approval of his friends. He intended to preach the English sermon afterwards, but, unfortunately for himself, he had *per incuriam* brought two Gaelic sermons. He did not dare to preach an extempore English discourse, and he could not draw upon an old one. The only member of Presbytery present, equal to the emergency, was Dr Brower, and to him therefore M'Cringer applied in his extremity, enforcing his request by the statement that he had a great many matters to attend to with regard to the other proceedings of the day. Had he known every thing, he would not have pressed this duty upon the rev. doctor. The latter had been made fully aware by Garrempey of the part M'Cringer had acted in the matter of the invitation, and of the un-

warrantable statement that M'Cringer had been asked by him to preach for himself. This had roused his indignation, but Garrempey had taken care to exact a promise that he would say nothing about it in the meantime.

The doctor saw perfectly the drift of M'Cringer's discourse, and his obvious desire to influence the minds of the people against the presentee. He determined to check-mate him.

It was one of the doctor's weaknesses, a pardonable one we admit, to delight in a *protégé*. Having found one with a grievance, he was ready, like Gideon, to do battle for him to the death. Here was a chance not to be thrown away, so he very complacently mounted the pulpit, and chose his text, as we have said, in the 147th Psalm, 10th verse : "He delighteth not in the strength of the horse; he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man." From this text, and with an elegance of diction, and fluency of utterance, which gave one the idea of a prepared discourse, he preached a powerful sermon, alluding to the remarks of the previous preacher, with regard to the wants of the parish, and setting before his audience what he considered ought to be the merits and qualifications of the pastor they required.

M'Cringer and his friends were thunderstruck. They saw the force and point of the doctor's remarks,

but could not account for the attitude assumed by the preacher. Low but significant whispers passed from one to the other, and looks, anything but pleasant, were directed towards the pulpit. The doctor, however, held on the even tenor of his way. The presentee himself was in attendance, rather an unusual circumstance, but he had been urged by Garrempey to be present. His heartfelt thanks beamed through the tears which moistened his eyes, as he shook hands with the worthy doctor, after he resumed his seat.

It had been intimated at the close of the sermon that the Presbytery were ready to moderate in the call, and accordingly that instrument was produced.

It was in the following terms:—

“WE, HERITORS, elders, members of the congregation of VETO, and parishioners of the parish of VETO, being Protestants, desirous of promoting the glory of God and the good of His church, being destitute of a fixed pastor, and being satisfied by good information, and our own experience, of the ministerial abilities, and of the suitableness to our capacities, of you, MR FERGUS OCHTERTYRE, have agreed to invite, as we hereby do invite, and call you to undertake the office of pastor among us, promising you all, dutiful respect; encouragement, and obedience, in the Lord. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have subscribed this call

before the Presbytery of Dunderhead, on the —— day of —— 18— years."

After the call had been read by the clerk of Presbyter, Huistan, who had his supporters conveniently placed, came forward and signed it, along with the whole of his household. He judiciously selected those who could write, and those who could not, at intervals, so as to avoid the appearance of a great number of signatures with marks from following each other.

This ruse was probably not observed, but it was adopted at the suggestion of Garrempey, who significantly remarked, that if the case went to the Assembly the members would not fail to be struck by a succession of names signed by mark.

"I had no idea," observed Sheepshanks, to his friend Stirk, "that there would be so many to sign."

"Neither had a," moodily observed the other; "some o' them are actually in ma ain service."

"Did ye see the mate o' the Kitty o' Lochgoil," signing't, alang wi' his wife an' twa sons? A'll speak tae oor agents in Glasgae, the owners, an' ma name's no Stirk if he'll no soon need tae look oot for anither berth. A thocht a was sure o' him, for a went up an end's erran till his hoose, an' had a lang crack wi' himsel' an' his wife, an' left them, as a thocht, clean in oor favours."

"Why, I declare," said Puncheon, "there's Mr

Still the super (meaning the supervisor of Excise). I never dreamt that he would go against us. I didn't ask him, but I understood he was to be neutral. He has crossed me once or twice before; I'll watch him for this. Do you know, Sheepshanks, whether he has reported Worm the gauger for what took place last month?"

"I really don't know."

"Well, the Generals of Excise are to be here in the course of a few weeks, and I'll see if I can't manage something. Dip's a very jolly fellow, and I think we can get him and Foreshot to send a report to the Board, that'll rather astonish the super, and his friend Worm."

"Is Dip still sweet upon Miss M'Phillabeg?"

"I think he is. We must show them some attention when they come, and our fair friend can make herself very agreeable if she likes."

"Do you know," whispered Sheepshanks, looking cautiously around, "Sneaker tells me that Poind's quite smitten with her, and has lately been making fierce love."

"Bah!" replied the other, "she's only making a fool of him. I think she would like to have Porter, but he doesn't seem to see that she has a weakness for him."

So went on the conversation, more or less animated,

the interlocutors every now and then breathing vows of direful vengeance, as some unfortunate individual subscribed the call, whom they thought they could punish, for daring to have a mind and will of his own.

The document being fully signed, the Presbytery next proceeded to dispose of its custody before enquiring whether there were any objections to be stated against the presentee.

CHAPTER XI.

OBJECTIONS TO THE PRESENTEE—RELEVANCY DEFERRED—SCENE AT THE READING AND SIGNING OF THE OBJECTIONS—PARTY FIGHT AT THE CLOSE OF THE PROCEEDINGS—THE PRESBYTERY ADJOURN TO DINE WITH THE OBJECTORS, AND THE PRESENTEE IS ESCORTED TO HIS QUARTERS IN PORTIER.

BEFORE the matter of the disposal of the call was taken up, Mr Garrempey rose and said,

“ Moderator, I wish it to be now recorded that I appear along with the presentee as his agent, in terms of a mandate which I request to be sustained and engrossed in your minutes.”

“ Hadn’t you better wait, Mr Garrempey,” blandly observed M’Cringer, who was acting as Moderator, *pro tem.*, “ until we have disposed of the call ?”

“ This is the proper time for my appearance,” quietly remarked Garrempey, who had got an inkling of the intention of intrusting that document to Mr Smites.

“ Oh, very well !” said M’Cringer, “ it’s a matter of no consequence.”

M’Cringer knew church practice better than any

member of court, and it was his object to do nothing which could be considered a breach of form, so as to prevent any appeal to the civil courts.

“Then,” said Poind, rising with a look of confident assurance, “I beg, Moderator, that you will minute that I appear on behalf of the objectors.”

“You will require to wait, I’m afraid, Mr Poind,” observed Garrempey, “until there are objectors in court.”

“They are all here,” sharply answered the other.

“Probably,” replied his opponent, “they may be in the church as individuals, but they have not as yet assumed the character of objectors, and, until objections are called for by the Presbytery, and given in, your clients, whoever they may be, have no *locus standi in judicio*.—You understand that, Mr Poind?” he added slyly.

Poind slightly coloured, but as he had learned the phrase out of Halkerton, he quickly added, “Certainly, you maintain that my clients have no standing as yet in court.”

“Of course,” replied the other, “the only party who has is the presentee. He has received a call from some two hundred parishioners, and is therefore *in titulo* to see to its disposal. You have no interest whatever in that document at present.”

M‘Cringer’s face showed that he was hardly satis-

fied with Poind's interference, so he said, "I think Mr Garrempey's right; we will minute your appearance, Mr Poind, afterwards, if there are objections to be given in, as to which we as yet know nothing as a court."

"But you know it too well privately, sir," exclaimed a deep voice in the gallery.

"Who's that making a noise?" said M'Cringer, rising up in some agitation. "If there's any more interruption, the party causing it will be put out."

"Easier said than done," was the reply.

Nobody could tell from whom the voice came. Order, however, being shortly afterwards restored, the proceedings were resumed.

M'Cringer, being Moderator, could hardly make a motion himself as to the disposal of the call, but he had managed to get the Rev. Teevish M'Sneevish to do so.

That gentleman accordingly got upon his legs, and said,

"Moderator, I move that the call be intrusted to Mr Smits, teacher of the side school, until next meeting of Presbytery, in order that parishioners who have not yet signed, may have an opportunity of doing so. It would be much more convenient," he continued, in querulous and husky tones, "for all parties, that this should be done. Sometimes it is left with the parish schoolmaster, but I'm afraid

he has too much to do. Mr Smites has more time at command, and his house is in a central part of the parish."

This motion was seconded by the Rev. Mr Sneck-draw.

"I don't know," said Garrempey, rising, "whether there will be any counter-motion, but I must, in the meantime, object to the proposed disposal of the call. No satisfactory reason has been given for departing from the usual practice of placing it in the hands of the parish schoolmaster, a man, who I understand, is a zealous member of the Church of Scotland, and of irreproachable character."

"He is perhaps too zealous," remarked Poind.

"I rather think, sir," sarcastically observed the former, "that your zeal for your clients has run away with your discretion. If you knew any thing of church practice, you would know that you are not in court, and that your interference now is simply an impertinence."

Great ruffing in the gallery, in the midst of which, Poind collapsed.

"I say again," roared out M'Cringer, "that we will not submit to this noise."

"Who drew up the objections?" asked another voice from the gallery. "Had you a hand in it?"

Here there was great confusion and noise, M'Crin-

ger vociferating and gesticulating, but his voice was drowned by the uproar.

In the midst of the hubbub several parties were seen under the very noses of the reverend court, coolly taking out bottles and flasks of whisky, and passing them round with the greatest nonchalance.

"Ye wad be much the better o' a dram, Mr M'Clinger," exclaimed a drunken fellow in the body of the church.

"Put that man out," fiercely exclaimed Puncheon.

He happened to be one of the intended objectors, but had got too groggy to be of any use.

"A wad like tae see the man that wad try that," bellowed forth the offender; and in truth, he was rather a dangerous looking customer.

"A tell ye what it is," he continued, addressing Puncheon, "a'm no gaun tae sign yer objections. A think a had as muckle richt tae get draff as Geordie Fraser."

Here the confusion culminated in a desperate attempt to expel this recalcitrant parishioner, but it was found impossible to do so. At length, by dint of coaxing on the part of a person who seemed to have some influence over him, he was induced to leave the church.

This scene over, the proceedings were resumed;

Garrempey was allowed to continue his argument. He showed clearly, that so far from being a convenience, it would be quite the reverse, to place the call in the hands of Mr Smites, who, he observed, was under the control of those whom he understood to be objectors—that the great bulk of the parishioners were domiciled in and around the village of Porterbier, some three or four miles distant from the residence of Mr Smites—that, even if the dwelling of that individual was, geographically speaking, more in the centre of the parish than the house of the parish schoolmaster, that was of no consequence. It might as well be argued, he added, that a document affecting the people of Algeria, should be left for signature in the desert of Sahara, in the tent of some wandering Arab, because it was a more central part of Africa than Algiers.

The discussion upon this important point was taken up by almost every member of Presbytery. It was evident from the sentiments of the speakers that Garrempey would be defeated.

The Rev. Dr Brower got up at last to move an amendment to the effect that the Presbytery order the call to be left with the parish schoolmaster.

This amendment was seconded by the Rev. Mr Skirlywhitter, clerk of Presbytery, who had been a college companion of the schoolmaster, and enter-

tained orthodox opinions as to the respect due to officialism.

On a division, however, the motion was carried by a large majority, to the evident satisfaction of M'Cringer and the objectors.

Poind rubbed his hands with delight, and looked round the audience as if he expected to be recognised as the winner of a victory.

Garrempey, however, merely dictated when the judgment was delivered, the usual formula.

"Against which order for the disposal of the call, the agent for the presentee protested and appealed to the ensuing meeting of the General Assembly, for reasons to be lodged in due time; took instruments, and craved extracts, which were allowed."

The mover of the motion intimated that he acquiesced in the judgment, and also took instruments and craved extracts.

It may be as well to explain here, for the information of those who are not acquainted with the subject, that there are four courts in the Church of Scotland —the Kirk Session, the Presbytery, the Synod, and Assembly, composed of ministers and elders. In appealing the decision of a Presbytery, the appeal is taken in the first instance to the Synod, if there is to be a meeting of that reverend body before the General Assembly meets in May, and from the Synod to the

Assembly. The Synod is composed of the members of Presbyteries, according to certain territorial divisions, while the Assembly is made up of representatives from all the Presbyteries. Some readers may be curious to know what is the meaning of taking instruments and craving extracts. Taking instruments simply means handing the clerk of Presbytery the sum of one shilling for every protest and appeal taken. Some clerks who look sharply after their fees, insist upon the cash being paid down on the nail. Others, again, trust to the agents, and render an account of the various shillings when the case is at an end. Craving extracts means, that the clerk is to furnish, for a fee which is generally exorbitant, a copy of such part of the proceedings as may be asked for.

When the case is to be brought before the Assembly, the whole minutes of the Presbytery, evidence for both parties, sermons, if objected to, and other documents, must be printed by the unsuccessful party. A sufficient number of copies requires to be thrown off, to furnish one for each member of Assembly which must be lodged with the Assembly clerk a certain number of days before the annual meeting in May, involving an expense, probably of about sixty pounds for printing alone. If to this be added the fees charged by the Presbytery and Synod clerks, it may

take about two hundred pounds before an unfortunate presentee can carry his case before that "respectable mob," as Professor Blackie not inaptly calls it, "THE VENERABLE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND."—This sum does not, of course, include the account to his law agents nor counsels' fees. A presentee may calculate, if he is opposed by determined objectors, that he cannot have his case finally decided for less than five or six hundred pounds, and it frequently costs considerably more than the latter sum. No matter how evidently puerile or malignant the opposition may be, he cannot, even though successful, recover a farthing of the costs. Where the presentee is poor, or the objectors are few, and are either unable or unwilling to incur heavy outlay, a worthy man may feel himself obliged to relinquish his right of appeal; or one who is not so, may succeed in getting into a parish because those who honestly objected to him had not the means of carrying out their opposition.

But to return to the further proceedings of the Presbytery of Dunderhead. After the call had been disposed of as has already been stated, the Moderator intimated, "that the Presbytery were now prepared to receive any objections to the settlement of the Rev. Mr Fergus Ochtertyre to the parish of Veto."

"Now's your time, Sheepshanks," said Poind, "to go forward with the objections."

"I thought that you were to do that."

"No, I have just got a note from M'Cringer to say that it is not time for me to appear yet, and that the objections should come spontaneously from the parishioners."

"Very well, I suppose I must do it, although, hang it, I don't quite like the job, I feel rather nervous. Give us a pull of your flask, Puncheon—I know I'll get a lot of insolence from Huistan and his men."

"A'll gang wi' ye'," said Stirk.

At any other time Sheepshanks would probably have said, "save me from my friends," but when one requires sympathy and support, he is not always particular as to his companions, so he put a bold face on the matter, and both worthies left their seats amidst an almost breathless silence on the part of the audience.

The objections handed to the Presbytery clerk, and read aloud by that functionary, were as follows:—

"OBJECTIONS to the settlement of the REV.
FERGUS OCHTERTYRE, of the Parish of Loch-
spelding, in the Church and Parish of Veto."

First.—"The parish of Veto is very large and hilly, the ways are extremely crooked, and the country, generally, is covered with morasses, banks, braes, woods, styles, and burns. It is very uncultivated,

and would require the services of a young, vigorous, and energetic minister, which the presentee is not, he being a man upwards of fifty years of age. It is understood that he has a wife and family, and a lame leg, which is shorter than the other, and is thus legally disqualified for attending to the ministerial interests of the parish. He would find it to be very up-hill work, and the objectors believe that it would be more for the good of the church if he were to be settled somewhere else."

Second.—"The presentee does not speak in the broad open manner in which the people of Veto are accustomed to speak, and to be spoken to, and this arises from his tongue being either too large or too small for his mouth, or from both causes, or from some defect in his palate, to the objectors unknown, by all or some, or any of which, his discourses are rendered unacceptable and unprofitable to his hearers."

Third.—"That the presentee's voice is too loud for the size of the church, which it fills to an intolerable extent, and this is especially distressing to the aged and infirm. So powerful are the echoes produced by the voice, that very often the voice itself cannot be heard."

Fourth.—"The presentee has a fierce head of red hair, which prevents due heed being given to his discourses by light-headed people, who make remarks

thereupon, by which the rest of the congregation are prevented from being edified, and they lose the heads of his discourse; added to this, the presentee squints —his nose is too small for the size of his face, and he blows it in a manner and with a snorting noise, to which the parishioners of Veto have not been accustomed. From all these causes, or some of them, the objectors cannot follow his discourses, and they have failed to receive any benefit from them."

Fifth.—“The presentee has not attended to his parochial duties in the parish of Lochspelding. In particular, he has avoided every opportunity of walking when he could get a lift in a cart or gig, and has thus shown his inability to traverse such a parish as Veto. Besides, he sometimes resides out of his own parish.”

Sixth.—“The presentee is not disposed to be charitable, for, in the opinion of the objectors, the psalms he selected, were intended to irritate and insult those who might think it a Christian duty to oppose him. His prayers had no unction, and he opened his eyes so frequently that, with his peculiar squint, he mesmerized several aged and infirm females, who were found so fast asleep that they could with difficulty be roused to consciousness, although various passes were made under their noses with potent snuff boxes and pungent vinaigrettes.”

Seventh.—“The presentee’s delivery had more the appearance of reiteration than a direct appeal to the understanding and heart, and the discourses seemed to have been got up for the occasion, but they were not appropriate. They were unconnected and hurried. Besides, the presentee did not, on two occasions, read any portion of the Holy Scriptures at the commencement of the services, as enjoined by the Directory of the Church of Scotland.”

Eighth.—“That the presentee has endeavoured to make himself too agreeable to the parishioners of Veto, and resides in an inn or hotel, in the village of Porterbier, contrary to the dignity and character of a minister of the gospel.”

Lastly.—“For these reasons we object to the presentee, and hold that he is not a qualified party to be inducted to the church and parish of Veto.”

To enumerate the interruptions and confusion which followed the reading and signing of these objections would occupy too much time. Very few of the poor people who were brought forward could write, and their names were put down for them by Sheepshanks or Stirk. Hardly one of them understood the nature of the objections, and several were heard to declare that they thought it was all right because they were told so. One old man on being asked if he had any objections to the presentee’s sermons, replied,

"Na, but a'm tould he's no fit fur oor pairish."
When questioned as to how he was unfit, he said,
"She'll no ken verra weel hersel', but folk wha
hae learning, hae tel't her sae."

After the objections were signed, Mr Poind came forward and said,

"Moderator, I wish it to be recorded that, at this stage, I appear on behalf of the objectors, and for all who may adhere to them in terms of mandate."

"You are rather too fast, Mr Poind," observed Garrempey, "I object to your appearance for people of whom we know nothing, and reserve my right to question the title of those who have now signed."

In this point Garrempey was successful.

The Presbytery fixed a meeting to take place in three weeks, to determine the relevancy of the objections, and the farce was "closed with prayer."

So ended the first stage of proceedings which probably cannot be witnessed anywhere out of Scotland. No sooner had the church been emptied of its noisy, and by this time, drunken occupants, than a party fight took place worthy of Donnybrook. The majority of the Presbytery, along with Poind, found their way to a comfortable dinner at the house of Puncheon, while Huistan and part of his followers escorted the presentee and his agent to their quarters at Porterbier.

CHAPTER XII.

MATRIMONIAL SPECULATIONS OF A LAWYER AND A MINISTER—EXPEDITION TO SNUFFMULL IN SEARCH OF EVIDENCE AGAINST THE PRESENTEE BY AN IRISH CLERK AND HIGHLAND ELDER—RESULTS OF THE ADVENTURE—IN THE HANDS OF THE IRISH POLICE.

THE hint given by Miss M'Corkscrew to Mr Sneaker about the probability of the decease of her aunt, and of her interest in the will, was not lost upon the rev. gentleman, so before leaving for Glasgow he resolved to have a private interview with Mr Poind.

It happened that the aunt, whose death was apparently so little desired by Sneaker, resided in the vicinity of the capital of the west, and he thought he could find out through Poind whether or not the expectations of Miss Flora were well founded. On the morning of his intended departure he had an interesting interview with the young lady.

“ Well,” said the clerical swain, as he was taking leave, “ I shall call to enquire for your aunt.”

“ I hope you will; she knows of our attachment, and, I have no doubt, will be glad to see you.”

"Well, good-bye, love."

"But I thought you wished me to walk with you as far as the steamer," she affectionately exclaimed.

"Oh! I couldn't think of asking you to do that," he blandly replied; "the weather looks very threatening, and you know you've a bad cough."

He was afraid her presence would spoil his chat with Poind.

So they parted,—the one full of love and affection, the other animated with absorbing selfishness.

Sneaker met Poind on the quay, and, taking his arm, said, "Am I to have the pleasure of your company to Glasgow?"

"No," replied the other; "I shall have to stay to precognosce witnesses, and to send off my clerk, Timothy Casey, with one or two others, to Snuffmull, to get up evidence."

"By the bye," observed Sneaker, "how do you ascertain about the disposition of a person's property?"

"From the records of course," was the ready reply, "if it's recorded. What sort of a disposition is it?"

"I believe it's a deed in favour of trustees as a settlement of property."

"I see."

"I may tell you," resumed Sneaker, "in confi-

dence, that Miss M'Corkscrew wished me to ask you privately about the settlement of her aunt, Mrs M'Creesh, who lives at Crossmungo, as she thinks she is named in it. She wishes to know privately. You needn't speak to herself about it—she wouldn't like that—but you can let me know."

"I see. Who are the law agents of the aunt?"

"Well, she told me that they were Messrs Law and Rule, writers, Trongate."

"I'll find it out for you, Mr Sneaker," confidently replied the lawyer, "without any charge."

"If I can be of any service to *you* then," warmly exclaimed Sneaker, "count upon me."

"I'm much obliged to you. I'm sorry you are leaving here so soon. We've had a jolly time of it. What a nice girl Miss M'Phillabeg is! I'm almost spooney about her."

"I think she rather likes you," answered the other, although he knew very well the reverse.

"You could do something for me with her through Miss M'Corkscrew, couldn't you?" said Poind.

"I've no doubt of it."

"Then we shall mutually assist each other."

"Of course."

By this time the steamer was ready to leave, and the two friends shook hands, promising to correspond upon this interesting subject.

At a meeting of the principal objectors, held the same day in the tap-room of M'Groggy, which, as already mentioned, was the rendezvous of "the opposition," the plans for the expedition to Snuffmull were discussed. Mr Timothy Casey, clerk to Messrs Horn and Poind, was present, having arrived by the last steamer. Timothy, it appeared, had been bred in the office of a Dublin solicitor in low practice, and was perfectly conversant with the mode of getting up evidence in cases of a certain description. He could drink any quantity of *potheen* and spout any amount of blarney. He was about thirty-five years of age, and the happy possessor of that snub-nosed, wide-mouthed, and high-cheek-boned cast of countenance peculiar to the "finest pisantry in the world," which Cobbett attributed to their inordinate use of potatoes. He had all the ready wit attributed to his countrymen, and the comic twinkle of the small sunken pig-eye of the genuine bogtrotter. It was said that he was at one time a detective, had something to do with the arrests in '48, and knew a little about the cabbage garden which failed to conceal the person of Smith O'Brien. How or why he left the Green Isle was not very well known. Possibly he might have been able to exclaim, with Barrington the pickpocket, who, when apostrophising himself and his companions at Botany Bay, said—



"True patriots we, for, be it understood,
We left our country for our country's good."

Certain it is, however, that Casey found his way to Glasgow, and got a seat in the office of Messrs Horn and Poind, where his services were found to be of considerable value.

"I think Mr Casey should start by the first steamer for Snuffmull," observed Poind.

"Certainly," said Sheepshanks; "but do you understand Gaelic, Mr Casey?"

"Lave me alone for that," he answered, with a knowing wink.

"Well," continued the former, "you may know Irish Gaelic, but I think it will be necessary," he said, addressing Poind, "to send Alister Fillyerglass along with him, as he understands the Gaelic of Snuffmull, and knows Ochtertory, the principal town, and the district of Lochspelding."

"Perhaps it would be as well."

"Och, sure, and I'll be glad av a concurrent," observed Casey; "I'll be happy to make the acquaintance av the gentleman ye mane."

Alister was sent for, and full and particular instructions were given to him and Casey as to what they were to do, along with letters to some friends of Mr Puncheon, in the town of Ochtertory, where the steamer would arrive.

The above arrangements were afterwards discussed at dinner in Porter's hospitable mansion, where Poind and his Irish clerk were guests. They did not however, escape the sharp ears of Jessie Macgregor, who was waiting table. She lost no time in calling at Huistan's, and informing him of what was intended.

"We must checkmate this attempt, Mr Ochtertyre," observed Garrempey, at a consultation held immediately upon the information being obtained. "I know something of Mr Casey. He's up to making enquiries of this sort, and we all know about Mr Fillyerglass. Have you any friends at Ochtertory who are able to outwit them?"

"Well, I think Jock M'Service, the sheriff-officer there, is as knowing as any Irish detective, and I'm sure he would do anything for me."

"Then," said Garrempey, "I'll send him a letter, which I don't mean to let you see, but you can write a few lines, which I shall enclose, to show that I have authority for what I do."

What Garrempey wrote we do not know, but his letter was posted so as to be received a day before the arrival of Casey and his companion.

Jock M'Service was a sheriff-officer, remarkable for astuteness, as many Highland sheriff-officers are. His ordinary manner was quiet and undemonstrative, but he had a rough facility in taking upon himself

almost any character. Especially could he assume a great deal of plausibility when he liked. Jock possessed a fair share of the article which English writers, at least people who write in England, grudgingly admit exists in Scotland in the form of "dry wit," having probably discovered in performing the celebrated surgical operation necessary to be undergone by a Scotsman, before he can comprehend a joke, that his brain contains more peculiarities than that remarkable current which always flows steadily towards the south, with an erratic easterly variation when some Caledonian magnate happens to be attached to the post of India. Ah! *pauvre* Goldsmith, how could you and that race of perfervid Celts who, translated to English soil, manage to escape *l'esprit bouché* of foggy London, in spite of the hebetose tendency of roast beef, plum pudding, and XX,—how *could* you have acted the part of "Capability Brown," and have nurtured the exotic plant of English wit, now warming it with your merry sunshine, and now watering it, alas! too often, with your tears? But why, O why, should you have furnished the malicious Saxon with a shaft so keen, and, at the same time, so pitiless and undeserved as the sting which lurks in that caustic adieu

"Merry Whitefoord, farewell! for thy sake I'll admit
That a Soot may have humour—I had almost said wit?"

Do you never think, ye giddy crew, how often you have wantonly wounded your country by the gall-tipped shafts of a hireling quiver? and that, if she succumbs at last and sinks into a mere province of Cockneydom, she will reproach you in words more bitter than those ascribed to the dying eagle, when he found that the cruel barb which pierced his heart, was a feathered pinion from his own wing?

But we are interrupted by the observation of a stout gentleman, who introduces himself as Mr John Bull.

“ Will you be kind enough, Mr Bull, to put that question of yours again ? ”

“ Certainly ; I should like to ask you, with reference to the highly moral and patriotic sentiments you have just been expressing with regard to your country, what it is precisely that you yourself are doing just at this particular moment ? ”

“ Why, sir ! I’m trying to show up—that is—hem—to—to—”

“ Exactly, my good fellow—don’t agitate yourself —what you were going to say is quite right, and proper, too ; but tell me where’s the mighty difference between doing this same little bit of showing up in Scotland and doing it in London ? ”

“ Why, really—one’s own house, you know—quite another pair—”

"Don't see it at all, Sandy."

"Well, well, I daresay not—that's what you always say—won't listen to anything we've got to say here—get up a laugh against us in the *Thunderer*, or in the columns of the minor *Jupiter*—won't give us the chance of turning the laugh against you though—open the Temple of Janus, but take care that the denizens of Cockaigne only see one face of the figure. Just like the boy who chalked 'No popery' on the door, and then——"

"Bah! Sandy, you're becoming disagreeable—"

"Too bad, John, the old story—

'La raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure.'

"Well, come, Sandy! fair play, let's have it out—unicorn, red lion, Wallace monument, and all!"

"It's no use, John, you wouldn't be convinced though I left Scotch metaphysics and proved my proposition with the precision of De Morgan. I think I'd better go on with my narrative."

"Go on, and prosper. You'll save *me* some trouble at all events. I sincerely wish I could prevail upon some of your compatriots to 'gang hame' and help you.—Good bye."

Highlanders are seldom more clannish than when the character of the minister they "sit under" is concerned. M'Service knew all about the Veto case, so

far as it had gone, and considered that Mr Ochliter-tyre was a very ill used man, that a slur, in fact, had been thrown upon the district in general, and upon himself in particular, by the objections that had been stated against him. On getting Garrempey's letter, he determined, if possible, to thwart the intentions of the exploring party—not that he was afraid that they could find out any thing that would really do the minister harm, but to punish the audacity of Casey, an Irish detective, as Garrempey informed him, in presuming to invade the sacred soil of Snuffmull on such a sacrilegious mission. Upon the principle that "twa heeds are better than ane," which was a cardinal point in Jock's philosophy, he took into his counsel his clerk and assistant, Archy M'Taggart, having great faith in his natural sagacity and discretion.

Archy was about eighteen years of age, and, of course, wore a fierce head of the proverbial red hair as a necessary complement to that equally indispensable garment, the kilt. The latter article, as well as the relative coatee, being of an intensely lively green, Archy, who was rather tall and slender, gave not a bad idea, when seen creeping along, of an exaggerated hollyhock endowed with locomotion. As a matter of course he was profusely peppered with freckles, and, it is needless to add, that he was cun-

ning as a fox. He rejoiced over a lock hole execution, which, for the benefit of English readers, we may explain is a certificate by a sheriff officer that a writ has been served by being left in the keyhole of a defendant's domicile. The cause of Archy's rejoicing over such a document being held effectual by the law of his native country may very rapidly be inferred from the fact, that a decree in absence will follow at once upon the production to a judge of such a certificate, whether service has been actually made upon the defendant or not, personal service not being necessary by the law of Scotland.

We do not wish to be cruel to Archy, but, in the interests of truth, we are obliged to state that he had signed many such certificates as a witness to the acts therein set forth, having been well and duly accomplished at the particular locality specified, without having been actually a spectator of the same. Considerable allowance must, however, be made for the great distance which it would be sometimes necessary to travel to the locality itself, over barren moors and craggy mountains, and it is to be considered that Jock's business could not have got on so well if he had to pay the expense of two individuals instead of one, for it is right to add that he did *sometimes* go himself upon the distant journey. It is also fair to state that Jock had a firm belief that Archy, like a good many

Highlanders—of the past, was possessed of the hereditary faculty of second sight, and would be reasonably cognisant that all things were done regularly and in order. In short, Archy had a decided weakness for any description of work which could be included under the title of “the office of a sheriff-officer made easy.” He had a strong love for poindings and sequestrations for rent, particularly the latter, for, as an almost inevitable consequence, wherever farm stock was attached, a sale followed in due time, and Archy very often acted as clerk of the roup, at which important proceeding there was always plenty of whisky and bread and cheese going, and not rarely a substantial dinner. Besides, Archy frequently managed to secure, by a process known only to himself, some capital bargains.

The aim of M‘Service was, if possible, to prevent Casey and Fillyerglass from seeing the parties to whom he was informed they had letters of introduction. For this purpose it was necessary that he should intercept the travellers as soon as the steamer came in. On the arrival of the boat, Jock at once stepped on board. He soon picked out Casey and his companion, and walking up briskly, he said,

“Hoo d’ye do, Mr Casey an’ Mr Fillyerglass ?
Mr Puncheon an’ Mr Sheepshanks, o’ the pairish o’
Veto, hae sent me word tae dae a’ I can to help ye

in getting up evidence in the case ye hae come aboot. A'm Mr M'Service, Sheriff Officer."

"We're moighty obloiged to yez, Mr M'Service," said Casey, "and as we don't know the counthry here aboots, av coarse we'll need yer assistance."

"Is there any Hotel in thim parts?" he enquired. "Troth an' its quare I feel afther being rowled about for a day and noight on board that baste av a stamer."

"Ou ay," replied M'Service, "jist come doon this wey."

Jock led them to a public house, which was kept by Archy's mother, and where his red-haired assistant was in waiting.

"Mr Puncheon," continu'd the sly Highlander, "said that ye had letters tae folks here, an' that a was to let them ken that ye were comin'. They're a' awa' frae hame the day, at the market o' Torven, an' winna' be back for twa days, but a think the letters sud be left at their places, an' a'll get a lad to deliver them."

So ringing the bell, which Archy answered, he said, "This gentleman wishes ye to deliver thae letters, an' tell the folks that we'll ca' the day aifter the morn aboot them."

The unsuspecting Casey at once handed the credentials to Archy, who, after leaving the room, went care-

fully over the addresses, which the former had not looked at, opened the letters for his own special edification, and quietly consigned them to the flames of the kitchen fire.

A considerable quantity of whisky was not long in being consumed by the thirsty travellers.

"Whereabouts is this place, Lochspelding?" asked Casey.

"Aboot acht miles frae here," replied Jock. "We cud easily reach there afore dark to catch the steamer that'll tak us to the place we've tae gae tae first."

"It's a quare name," said Casey.

"Oh! no," dryly replied the other, "they catch speldings and finnan haddies there, an that's the reason o' the name."

"D'ye mane them brown fish as ye see in the windseys av Glasgow shops?"

"Of coorse."

"Shure they taste av smoke," replied the Irishman.

"That's because o' the water," quietly answered the Highlander; "the whisky tastes the same."

"There must be some quare fish here," rejoined

"You'll fin' that afore ye leave," replied Jock.

Fillyerlass enjoyed the joke, for he had no great liking to his companion.

"It's time for us to start," at length observed M'Service. So they all set off, including Archy M'Taggart, for the steamer which was to carry them up the loch.

It is necessary to mention that the boat, after remaining for some hours at Ochtertory, proceeded a certain distance further up the loch, where she stopped to take in cargo, and then returned to Glasgow, without calling at any place on the way, except at a certain port in Ireland, considerably out of the ordinary route of steamers. The parties reached the place where the boat was lying after dark, and adjourned to a public house, which, as Casey observed, was "quite convenient." Here they drank pretty freely for a few hours, Casey and his companion indulging in what was said to be London porter, but M'Service drinking only whisky, and that sparingly. He knew the landlady intimately. She was a great admirer of Mr Ochtertyre, and it is to be presumed that Jock explained to her fully the object which the two visitors had in view. M'Service went down to the boat leaving Archy with the travellers. The captain, and indeed almost all the crew, belonged to the district of Lochspelding, and took a lively interest in the success of the presentee. What the sheriff officer said to the landlady, or to the captain, or did with regard to the liquor, if he actually did anything, must be left

to conjecture. Suffice it, in the meantime, to say that after an absence of about ten minutes, he returned to the public house, as the steamer was shortly to start. He found the two adventurers almost asleep, while Archy sat looking at them with the satisfied air of a colley dog, when his charge is upon its good behaviour.

"Come along, Mr Casey," said M'Service, "it's time for us tae gang."

They all rose, and proceeded to the steamer, which they soon reached.

"I incline to have a bit av a snooze," said Casey, when they got on board; "we've had precious small slape, an' that moighty big walk over thim hills, an' yer pate reek, whisky, and Lundun parter, have made me intoirely saparific, an' no mistake."

Fillyerglass expressed his desire to enjoy the same luxury.

"Jist come in here then," said M'Service, showing them into a bunk; "stretch yersels there, an' a'll ca' ye whan we stop."

"Ye're a good sowl," muttered Casey, as he fell asleep, a remark which was responded to by a loud snore from Fillyerglass.

"Is it all right?" said the captain, as M'Service and Archie leaped from the paddle-box to the pier, while the steamer moved off.

"Yes," significantly observed the other; "I hope you'll see them safe to Ireland." The only answer was a hearty laugh, as the captain mounted the bridge.

The steamer, in consequence of the temporary derangement of one of her paddles, did not reach her first port of destination until an early hour of the next morning after her departure from Lochspelding, and still the two passengers in whom we are at present interested, slept. The noise, however, of tramping feet upon deck and blowing off of steam, and the other hubbub attendant upon the mooring of a steamer at a quay, awakened the sleepers, and, drowsy and stupid, they rose from their lairs, rubbed their eyes, and looked around. They had been two or three nights on their journey from Porterbeir, at sea, and over unknown ground, had imbibed a considerable quantity of different liquors, and lost their ordinary perception of the lapse of time.

"Whar are we noo?" said Fillyerglass.

"Faix and that's just what I don't execly know," replied his companion. "I reckon we're somewhere in the lough where they find speldings and finnan haddocks. I feel moightly bad. My head's splitting, so I think the best thing we can take is to have a hair av the dog that bit us."

"Aweel I daursay ye're richt," said Fillyerglass ; "A dinna feel verra weel mysel'. I wunner whaur's Mr M'Service."

"Oh ! we'll soon find him."

"Steward !" he roared out, "bring some whisky bitters, and tell Mr M'Service that we want him."

The steward smiled, and said, "Yes, sir."

Having discussed their "mornin'," as Alister called it, and waited for some little time, Casey smelt the tempting aroma of breakfast in the cabin.

"Be jabbers," he exclaimed, "I feel oncommon hongry. I must have brickfist."

"A verra guid thing," said Alister.

"What's become of Mr M'Service ?" asked Casey.

"He went up the pier about half-an-hour ago," replied the captain, "and asked me to tell you that he would be back as soon as he found whether the person he spoke to you about last night was at home."

"All right," said Casey ; "but, bedad, I don't know at all who that same person is."

The steamer was only to wait for about an hour, and our two travellers consumed nearly that time at breakfast. The warps were cast off, and the boat was ready to back out, when the captain came down to the cabin, saying hurriedly, "Now, gentlemen, you must get ashore. Mr M'Service is waiting for you at the head of the quay."

So they hastily ran up the cabin stair and leapt on the pier.

The steamer moved off. It was a raw morning, misty clouds rendered every object dim and obscure. As they walked up the jetty, Casey had a hazy idea that he had seen the place before. It was not, however, until he got into a street that he formed any definite notion of where he was. All of a sudden, he exclaimed, with a look of great consternation, "Be jabbers, but they've landed us at Portslush! sowl, and what are we to do at all, at all?"

Passing round the corner of a street a policeman met them right in the teeth.

"Hillo! Timothy, darlint, is that you? Why, man alive, we've been looking for you for a long time. Come along wid me—in a hurry now—for shure its cowld yer looking this blissed marnin'."

"For what?" said Casey, turning pale.

"For O'Dowd's forged bill, av coorse. Who's yer friend?"

"I hae naething to dae wi' forged bills," tremblingly ejaculated poor Fillyerglass, while the unlucky Casey only uttered a groan.

"I'll take both on yez howandivir," said the policeman; and the two unhappy searchers for evidence were marched off to the police station.

CHAPTER XIII.

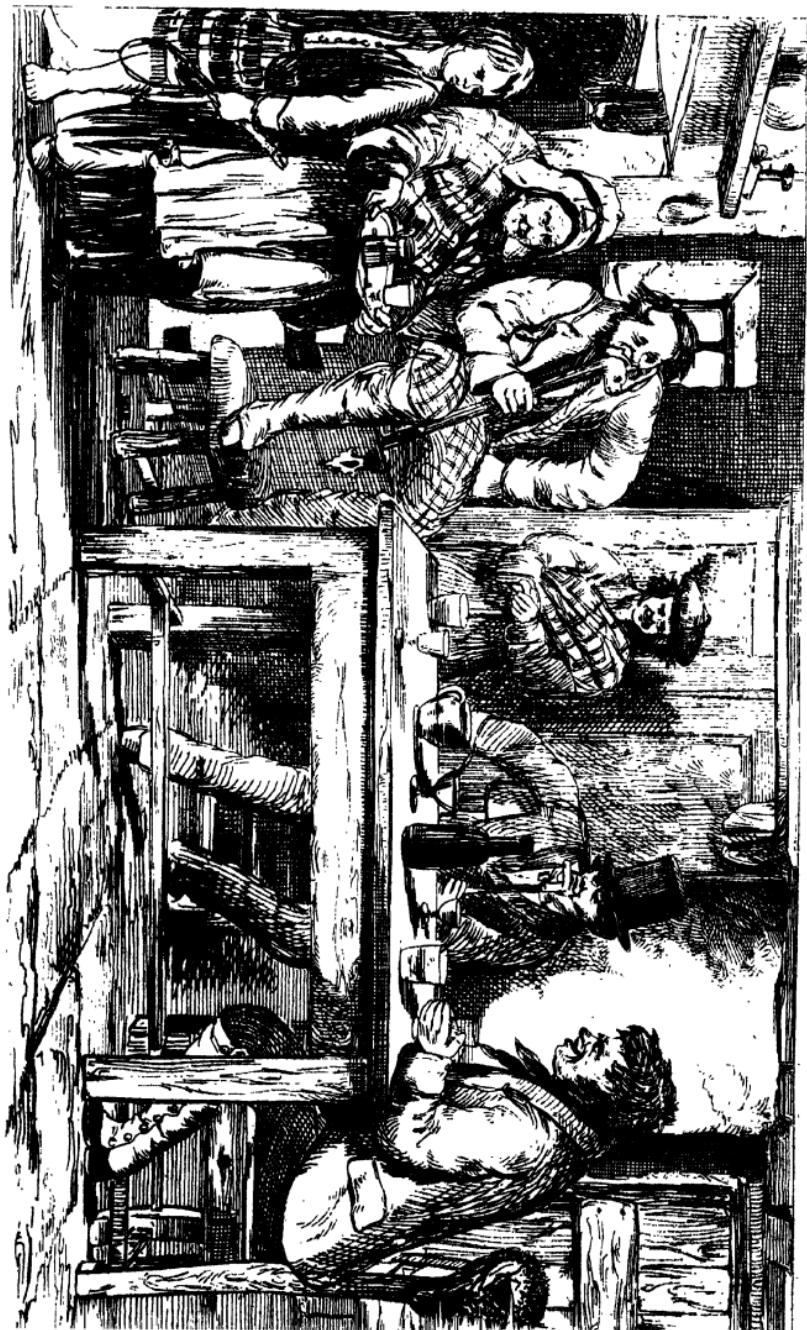
SETTLING THE RELEVANCY—ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST THE RELEVANCY OF THE OBJECTIONS—SCENES IN THE CHURCH—CHARACTERS OF THE REV. CALEB BOUNCER AND THE REV. DR TOTTY M'KILLRUSSELL.

ON the day appointed for receiving the call, and settling the relevancy of the objections, the Presbytery of Dunderhead met in the parish church of Veto. The audience was not quite so numerous as that of the previous meeting; but still there was a very considerable attendance. The proceedings were opened by the Moderator, Mr M'Slykey, with a prayer, during which he appeared to be what is called in Scotland, “greeting.”

The minutes ran as follow :—

- At VETO, and in the parish church there, the — day of — 18— years..

THIS DAY, the Presbytery of Dunderhead having met conform to appointment, and being constituted.—
Sederunt.—The Rev. Dr Totty M'Killrussell, of the parish of Cullachy; the Rev. Thomas M'Slykey, of the parish of Greetknowe; the Rev. Lauchlin Mackintrowsers, of the parish of Lochabernomore; the



Rev. Dr Pompeius Browser, of the parish of Blairorgan; the Rev. Alister M'Cringer, of the parish of Ochonochree; the Rev. Caleb Bouncer, of the parish of Ivirkiphimout; the Rev. Whymper M'Snee, of the parish of Gilliecallum; the Rev. Ebenezer Sneckdraw, of the parish of Brose Athole; the Rev. Teevish M'Sneevish, of the parish of Sneeshan; the Rev. Havral Clash, of the parish of Clavers; the Rev. Inkhorn Skirleywhitter, clerk of Presbytery.

The minutes of last meeting were read and approved of.

Parties being called, there appeared for the presentee, Mr Gabby Garrempay, S.S.C., Edinburgh; and for the objectors, Mr Sharper Poind, writer, Glasgow.

The call being asked for, was produced by Mr Leonard Smites, teacher of the side school.

The Presbytery instructed the clerk to analyze the call, when it was found that it was signed by five hundred individuals, of whom there were no heritors, two hundred communicants—one hundred names were signed by marks, and fifty by mandate.

The Presbytery resumed consideration of the objections, when, having compared the names attached to the same with the roll of communicants, they found that the number of objectors on the roll, was ten.

The Presbytery then proceeded to take up the relevancy of the objections.

The Moderator said the first objection was as follows :—

“The parish of Veto is very large and hilly, the ways are extremely crooked, and the country generally, is covered with morasses, banks, braes, woods, styles, and burns. It is very uncultivated, and it would require the services of a young, vigorous, and energetic minister, which the presentee is not, he being a man upwards of fifty years of age. It is understood that he has a wife and family, and a lame leg, which is shorter than the other, and is thus legally disqualified for attending to the ministerial interests of the parish. He would find it to be very up-hill work, and the objectors believe that it would be more for the good of the church if he were to be settled somewhere else.”

The Moderator asked the presentee’s agent if he had anything to urge against the relevancy of this objection.

Mr Garrempey—“Moderator, I admit that to a certain extent the ways of this parish, or at least of some of the parision—I mean parts of it—are extremely crooked and uneven; and with regard to morasses, I confess I have seldom seen more of them than are to be found in this locality, and I admit that they are uncultivated.”

Mr M'Clinger—"What do you mean, sir?"

Mr Garrempey—"I mean what I say; I am speaking to the relevancy, and I beg you won't interrupt me.

"But as these asses—I beg pardon—morasses, do not require to be crossed by the presentee, although all of them seem quite capable of being so, I don't see that this objection has any force. The sooner, however, the parish is drained of them the better. As to the banks and braes, woods, styles, and burns, the objection is very vague. The only bank of any consequence I know in the parish is the Union Bank. There is no specification given of these banks, braes, and streams. In fact they are more vaguely referred to even than those celebrated by Burns, in his song, as being 'All around the Castle of Montgomery.'"

A voice from the gallery—"They're all round my hat."

The Rev. Mr Bouncer here rose, in rather an excited state, to call for order in the court. After some very violent observations, in which he introduced the name of Dr Brower, he concluded, by saying, "The Presbytery cannot submit to be insulted by outsiders. It is quite plain that the individual in the gallery who said, 'All round my hat,' wished to take his nap off the Presbytery."

The Rev. Dr Brower—"I think you are display-

ing too much *hauteur* in the matter. No doubt the interruption was improper, but more temperate language might have been employed. Above all, you have no right to insinuate that I encourage such demonstrations. I may be a popular or an unpopular man. If you are not so, whose fault is that? The words of a certain Latin author of the post classical age seem to me to be very applicable to your complaint on the score of hat :—

‘Rorum scorum sunt divisorum,
Harum scarum divo,
Tag rag, merry derry, periwig, and hat band,
Hic haec hoc horum genitivo.’”

Considerable ruffing was heard from the gallery at the conclusion of the doctor's remarks, amidst the frantic gesticulations of his opponent.

Rev. Mr Bouncer—“I protest against this, and if any such interruption occurs again, I shall move that the party causing it be removed, an example which, I hope, will be felt.”

Moderator—“I think we had better let Mr Garrempey go on.”

Mr Garrempey—“As to the part of the first objection, which states that the parish requires the services of a young, vigorous, and energetic minister, it is also vague. It might, and probably did, mean that he

was wanted to marry some young lady in the parish."

Mr Puncheon here rose, in great wrath, from his seat in the area, and shaking his fist, exclaimed, "What do you mean by that, sir?"

Mr Garrempey—"You have no more right, sir, to interrupt the court than the man who said 'All round my hat.'"

Mr Poind—"I beg your pardon. There are special circumstances existing as to the state and condition of the parish, that justify Mr Puncheon."

Mr Garrempey—"Mr Puncheon is not a member of court, but merely an objector."

Rev. Mr McCringer—"Mr Puncheon is one of the most respectable parishioners of Veto, and any attempt to cast a slur upon his family connections ought not to be allowed."

Mr Garrempey—"I cast no reflections upon Mr Puncheon or his family—I merely said that the objection was vague, and that it might mean what I stated."

Rev. Dr Brower—"I must rise to order. I beg to move, Moderator, that the agent for the presentee proceed with his argument."

At this stage Puncheon and Sheepshanks exchanged glances.

"I think the doctor's going against us," said the latter.

"I've no doubt of it; I'll make him regret it. I know he hasn't paid up his last bill to Sandy Sampson, the banker. I'll try if I can't get the screw put on him."

Mr Garrempey being allowed to go on, proceeded as follows :—

"Moderator—I cannot see the force of the objection under discussion. It is said that my client is a man of fifty years of age, with a wife and family. Why should a younger man be necessary? Are there not elderly people in the parish, fathers and mothers of families to be looked after, and is it not more likely that such a person as the presentee, of tried experience, would be useful in the parish, than some youngster fresh from the Divinity Hall? I apprehend, Moderator, that the very fact of my client being of the age stated, and married, is one of his highest recommendations."

Mr M'Cringer—"Doubtful. A young man will work harder and get up new sermons."

Rev. Dr Brower—"How many new sermons did you ever get up?"

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"That, sir, I consider to be an impertinent question, and as it conveys an insinuation very disparaging to my character as a clergyman, I call upon you to apologise."

Rev. Dr Brower—"I merely asked a question;

If there was any insinuation at all it was made by yourself, for you led us to infer that the presentee would only give old sermons."

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—"An' what for no? An old sermon's as guid's a new one."

Rev. Dr Browser—"That depends upon who composed it. If it is taken from the printed sermons of some eminent divine, with a name sounding very like Bradley, and is given verbatim, or translated into Gaelic, it would doubtless be good enough."

The Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers collapsed—

Moderator—"This discussion is very irregular, and is becoming rather unpleasant. I must insist upon the agent for the presentee going on."

"Well, then," resumed Garrempey, "when I was interrupted, I was upon the point of the vigorous young man," (looking very significantly at Sneaker, who was seated beside the fair Flora, and others, in the family pew.) Perhaps Garrempey looked rather long in that direction, for there was evident confusion in the seat, the lady blushed, and hastily drew down her veil. Sneaker turned away his head, for the looks of the audience were upon him.

"What are ye looking ower here for?" shouted Stirk, rising in wrath.

"Not at you, sir, for you were too small to be seen before you rose. I was simply taking time to collect

my ideas, and if you don't be quiet, I must move the Presbytery to put you out."

A scene of great confusion ensued, little Stirk wishing to leap over the pew, but he was prevented.

"Let him come ower here," roared out Huistan, who was sitting beside Garrempey, "an' a'll fling him back again."

Mr M'Clinger—"You have no right to speak, sir."

Huistan—"Jist as muckle richt's your freens ower yonder."

Moderator—"Really this must not go on."

Order being at last restored, Garrempey proceeded. "The next part of the first objection is, that the presentee has a lame leg, the one being shorter than the other. Now, this is just as vague as the former. Why a lame leg should legally disqualify a man as minister of a parish, merely because it is lame, I cannot see. The degree of lameness or shortness is not averred, nor which of the legs is objectionable. It is said that it prevents him from walking. The Presbytery have seen the presentee walk, and, in fact, he has gone over the most difficult parts of a neighbouring parish, in company with the Rev. Mr M'Clinger."

Mr Poind—"I must remind my friend that we are now considering merely a question of relevancy."

Mr Garrempey—"But if your statements are so vague as not to amount to a disqualification on the part of the presentee, the Presbytery having evidence before their eyes to the very contrary, can take it into account in forming their judgment. Then, as to the statement that the presentee would find it to be very up-hill work for him, and that it would be more for the good of the church if he were settled elsewhere, all I would say is, that it might be up-hill work as regards a few of the objectors, but not with the people generally. The people here desire to have him for their pastor, as the call proves, and there could be no better evidence than this, that his settlement in the parish would be for the good of the church. These are all the observations, Moderator, I find it necessary to make on the first objection."

Mr Sheepshanks here rose, and said,—“Moderator, I want to know what the agent meant by saying that the presentee would have up-hill work with a few of the objectors. I wish him to state who they are.”

Huistan then got up and said,—“Because ye were his enemies afore he cam’ here at a’.”

Mr M‘Cringer—“Hold your tongue, sir, you’ve no right to speak, the question was not put to you.”

“Ye’re ane o’ the biggest enemies he’s got yersel’,” coolly replied Huistan.

Another scene here took place, amidst a confused noise of voices from all parts of the church, and remarks of every kind but that of compliment. A regular fight, or rather a very irregular one, was imminent; but at last, the Moderator having restored order, Mr Poind rose and said—

“Moderator—I do not think it necessary to take up your time with answering all the observations of my learned friend, Mr Garrempay. It must be quite obvious that the objections are perfectly relevant, and similar objections have been sustained in other cases with which you are doubtless well acquainted. I regret that my learned friend should have introduced matters of a personal nature into this case, for they are, as we have seen, only calculated to create irritation.”

It is needless to say that Poind took his cue from M'Cringer, and that the decision the Presbytery would arrive at was pretty well known beforehand.

Rev. Dr Brower—“Moderator, I rise to say, very shortly, that I consider the first objection, upon the face of it, clearly irrelevant. It is admitted that the presentee is a man of only fifty years of age, but that fact, and the circumstance of his having a wife and family, are stated as objections. The objectors want a young, vigorous, and energetic minister. For what particular purpose they want him they do not say,

nor in what respect a young man would be superior to the presentee. The word young is susceptible of comparison. Men of fifty are not considered old, although not so young as men of twenty-five, so that really I do not see any force in this objection. As to the allegation of lameness and other averments, they are not specific."

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"Moderator, I am clearly of opinion that the objection is relevant."

Parties being removed, the Presbytery, after "reasoning," by a majority, sustained the relevancy of the objection—the Rev. Dr Browser dissenting, and the Rev. Dr Totty M'Killrussell declining to vote. Against which deliverance the agent for the presentee protested and appealed to the ensuing meeting of the General Assembly, took instruments, and craved extracts, which were allowed.

The agent for the objectors acquiesced, and also took instruments and craved extracts.

The Presbytery next proceeded to consider the second objection, which was as follows:—

"The presentee does not speak in the broad open manner in which the people of Veto are accustomed to speak and to be spoken to, and this arises from his tongue being either too large or too small for his mouth, or from both causes, or from some defect in his palate, to the objectors unknown, by all, or some,

or any of which his discourses are rendered unacceptable and unprofitable to his hearers."

Mr Garrempey—"I think, Moderator, there can be no doubt of the irrelevancy of this objection. If it is held to be otherwise, no man except a native of this parish can ever hope to be its minister. As to the discourses being unacceptable, it is a curious circumstance that while five hundred have signed the call, only fifty have signed the objections. Of these fifty only ten are communicants, and their signatures were procured mainly through the persuasion, as I believe, of a few parties of influence who determined to oppose the presentee before they had ever seen him or heard anything about him, except that he was married."

Mr M'Cringer—"Really, Moderator, we cannot allow this. Here are imputations cast upon respectable people in the parish, which I know to be unfounded."

Mr Garrempey—"How do you come, sir, to be the champion of those respectable individuals? and how should you say, that what you call insinuations, are unfounded?"

A voice from the gallery—"He was tutor in ane o' their fainilies, and gat his pairish through that; an' it's himsel' drew up the objactions."

The noise and confusion that now arose, were

beyond description. In the midst of the din M'Cringer sat down, looking pale and exhausted.

"I think," said his friend, Sneckdraw, "you are rather overshooting the mark; if there's anything to be opposed, we had better divide the work."

"Very well," replied M'Cringer, with nervous agitation.

Rev. Mr Bouncer—"I must say, Moderator, that we ought to adjourn to the session-house, and have the matter discussed with closed doors,"—unfortunately the session-house in the parish of Veto wouldn't have held even the Presbytery.

We must do this rev. gentleman the justice to say that he was no party to M'Cringer's designs. He was a man of independent action, thoroughly conservative in views, but obstinate to a degree, and extremely fond of combating against the advocate whose client he determined to oppose, and of quarrelling with his brethren. But when a case went against his own views, he was the first man to see, that whatever decision was pronounced, was carried out according to the laws of the church, a duty which many of his brethren, in similar circumstances, were only too anxious to avoid. He was a firm ally but a bitter opponent, so long as opposition lasted; with an end of the case, however, came an end of the bitterness.

Moderator—"Well I think it will be absolutely

necessary to do what you propose, if such scenes are to be repeated. I really would impress upon those in the gallery not to interrupt the proceedings."

Mr Garrempey—"Moderator, while I regret these disturbances as much as any member of Presbytery, still it must be admitted that there has been as much if not more interruption from some individuals in the area."

Mr Poind—"If Mr Garrempey means to say that my clients have caused any disturbance, I deny it. Have you finished your observations, Mr Garrempey?"

Mr Garrempey—"Yes; I don't think it will be of much use to say anything more."

Mr Poind—"Moderator, I have very little to state. The objection I hold to be quite relevant. In fact it was held to be so in the Malcolmkill case, and I dare-say one of the most distinguished members of this or perhaps of any other Presbytery, whom I am glad to see now present, will corroborate me in saying that evidence was led to a great extent in that case, that the presentee did not speak in the broad open manner in which the people of that parish were accustomed to speak and to be spoken to. I, of course, allude to Dr Totty M'Killrussell."

Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"Moderator, Mr Poind is quite correct as to evidence having been given of this

description, but so far as I remember, there was no special objection framed like the present. I took, however, very little interest in the case to which he refers, although I did, in two previous cases in that parish, particularly the first."

"And finished the presentee," said the Rev. Mr M'Sneevish to his friend Mackintrowsers, "by showing that one of his sermons was a *verbatim* copy of the discourse of some nameless English divine taken out of an old magazine. It's a good thing for some of us that we came through the fire, before Lord Aberdeen's Act, eh ?"

Mackintrowsers looked straight before him, but made no reply.

Dr Totty M'Killrussell was perhaps as chaste and eloquent a preacher as any in the Church of Scotland. Probably for correctness and elegance of diction he was surpassed by none. A consummate master of the English language, he was an adept in the art of uniting an unexceptionable grammatical collocation of words to idiomatic purity and simplicity of expression. He possessed a style combining the highest rhetorical effect with the strictest logical accuracy of argument. Besides having the advantage of profound scholarship, he could freely employ those illustrations which extensive reading and an imagination, tempered by discipline, render so valuable to the preacher, and which

enable him to exemplify forcibly and clearly the truths he wishes to unfold. These, enunciated by a man of most reverend appearance, in a voice naturally melodious, employed with art and modulated by practice, rendered his discourses unusually attractive and always profitable. There was nothing spasmodic or sensational; all was, to a certain extent, level, but everything was elegant. There was not the tumult or spume of the torrent; one heard only the pleasing murmur of the rippling stream now flowing noiselessly over some pebbly bed, now forming smooth and gentle waterfalls, while flashes of silvery light seemed to dance upon its surface as one peered through the beautiful foliage which bordered its green and mossy banks. Earnestness and solemnity accompanied the voice, there was reverence in the look, and truth and conviction hung upon the lips. Added to these, there was a kindness and *bonhomie* about the man which made him a friend to all, and all friends to him. He was ill-assorted in his Presbytery, but his love of literature led him at any rate to take a less active interest in church cases than his younger or more fiery brethren, and perhaps he was wanting in that physical courage, which is frequently the only remarkable quality most of them possess. His mind was of too intellectual a cast to permit of his being boisterous or rude. Such a nature was incompatible

with the existence of the mere animal boldness which enables some men to endure with indifference the rough and tumble chances of the world.

The doctor continued—"I don't think the objection, as it stands, relevant. If it were put in the form in which it was sustained, in the case to which Mr Poind refers, I would have had a different opinion."

Rev. Dr Brower—"I concur in the view just expressed. If this objection were sustained, no man could expect to be settled in any parish unless he were brought up in it, and that would hardly suit some of us, I think."

Rev. Mr Bouncer—"I quite agree with the last two speakers, and principally upon the grounds just stated. Besides, although the presentee's mode of speaking may not be what the parishioners have been accustomed to, they will soon get used to it."

Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"Or perhaps, he might go about, as the French say English people do at Boulogne, with their mouths open and their tongues out, *pour attraper l'accent français*—to catch the broad, open sound of the parish of Veto."

Rev. Mr Havral Clash—"I think the objection perfectly relevant."

Dr Brower—"Is that because you happened to be born and brought up in your present parish?"

Rev. Havral Clash—"I consider the question impertinent."

Parties being removed, the Presbytery, after reasoning, unanimously find the objection irrelevant, the real, though of course not the ostensible ground being, that it would establish a very inconvenient precedent to sustain it, should any of themselves happen to receive a presentation to a parish, where a broad, open accent might be said to exist.

Mr Poind protested, and Mr Garrempey acquiesced *ut supra.*

The Presbytery adjourned to meet next day at ten o'clock, forenoon, at the same place.—Closed with prayer.

(Signed) T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

CHAPTER XIV.

RELEVANCY OF THE OBJECTIONS CONCLUDED—HOW THE PRESBYTERY DISPOSED OF THE OBJECTIONS TO THE PRESENTEE'S RED HAIR, HIS SQUINT, AND THE SMALLNESS OF HIS NOSE—A DRUNKEN BEADLE IN TROUBLE.

THE Presbytery met next day at 10 o'clock, a.m., to discuss the relevancy of the remaining objections, before a more numerous and interested audience than on the previous occasion. The proceedings were prefaced by a prayer offered up by the Rev. Mr M'Sneevish, with a hideous snivel, which destroyed any feeling of devotion likely to be produced in a crowd which came there merely for amusement.

The Moderator had not arrived, having, as it was understood, been dining with a jolly sheep farmer the day before. A severe headache in the morning required, as was wickedly whispered by those who pretended to know, a longer snooze than usual, and brandy and soda-water to make all straight. The sederunt did not show a large turn-out of members for several hours, but they came dropping in at intervals, making various excuses for not being present at the proper time.

The Moderator *pro tempore*, McCringer, found some preliminary business to occupy the court until he knew that he had a sufficient number of supporters to carry any motion he wished to make. On the arrival of the ordinary Moderator he left the chair, and the Veto case was proceeded with.

The Presbytery took up the third objection, viz., "That the presentee's voice is too loud for the size of the church, which it fills to an intolerable extent, which is especially distressing to the aged and infirm; so powerful are the echoes produced by the voice, that very often the voice itself cannot be heard."

Mr Garrempey—"Moderator, I shall not trouble you with many observations as to this objection. I think it is absurd. Had it been that his voice was too weak, I could understand it; but it being admitted that his voice is strong enough, there is an end of it. A man can, by practice, suit his voice to the acoustic properties of any building, if he have lungs sufficient for the purpose; but when he is speaking for the first time in a strange place, he may either speak too low or too loud. As to the aged and infirm, I should say that, for them at least, it would be rather an advantage to have a man who could speak well out, as old age does not improve one's capability of hearing."

Mr Poind—"I quite disagree with my learned

friend. If the presentee has got into a habit of loud speaking, he cannot, like a vicious horse, be cured of his vice. The church of Veto is peculiar."

Mr Garrempey—"So are some of the people."

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"You must not interrupt Mr Poind. I see whom you're aiming at."

Mr Garrempey—"I'm glad you do, and trust others will see it also."

Moderator—"We must really go on."

Parties being removed, the Presbytery, by a majority, sustained the objection, Dr Totty M'Kill-russell, Dr Brower, and the Rev. Mr Bouncer dissenting. Which deliverance was protested against, appealed, and acquiesced in *ut supra*.

The fourth objection was then discussed, viz., "The presentee has a fierce head of red hair, which prevents due heed being given to his discourses by light-headed people, who make remarks thereupon, by which the rest of the congregation are prevented from being edified, and they lose the heads of his discourses—added to this, the presentee squints, his nose is too small for the size of his face, and he blows it in a manner and with a snorting noise to which the parishioners of Veto have never been accustomed. From all these causes, or some of them, the objectors cannot follow his discourses, and they have failed to receive any benefit from them."

Mr Garrempey—"Moderator, this objection naturally divides itself into three heads. The first applies to the head of red hair." (Hear, hear, from one of the audience, evidently Irish).

Moderator—"Who said Hear, hear? where's the church officer?"

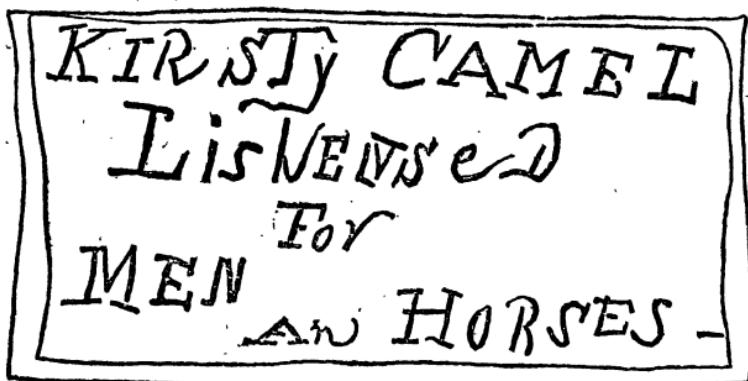
"He's not here," replied the same voice.

Moderator—"Really this is too bad. The beadle must be got. Does anybody know where he is?"

"Ou ay," replied some one, equally invisible, "he's ower wi' the ruling elder, Mr Quaighhorn, haeing twa three gills in Kirsty Campbell's."

Kirsty's "public" was only a stone's throw from the kirk, and the beadle, Donald M'Wheesht, was accordingly sent for, as the Moderator intimated that the proceedings must be stopped until there was some one in attendance to see that order was kept. Kirsty being known as a very spiritually minded woman, keeping good hours, and above all, good liquor, her establishment was pretty extensively patronised by customers of all cloths, and she consequently carried on a brisk trade, which flourished under a sign, the lettering of which had been the crowning effort of her eldest son, on the eventful day when, as his exultant parent used to relate, he had finished his last copy book "in the schule o' the godly Mr Leonard Smites." The progress of the youthful artist may

be judged of from the following *fac simile* of his work:—



The cunning rogue had, it would seem, in his conception of what a signboard should be, an attentive eye to the main chance; for, as he had, among other onerous duties, to perform that of holding the horses of travellers at the door, he took the opportunity of conveying, in what might appropriately enough be called the language of signs, the significant hint, that horses' heads ought not to be held for nothing, by drawing the figure of a bare-footed Celt engaged in the difficult task of restraining the antics of an impatient nag, while he, the holder, was in the act of touching his towzy *dosan*, by way of reverence, to a ridiculously stout personage, who appeared to be making frantic efforts in his breeches pockets to find the much coveted *tastan* as a reward; a proceeding

upon which the breechless Dougal seemed to be keeping a steady eye, while the other, by virtue of an atrocious squint, was supposed to be attentively regarding the tail of the recalcitrant charger.

Donald M'Wheesht was uncommonly fond of a "tram" at all times—never so much so, however, as when he succeeded in getting it "frae a freen." He had met during the day so many folk who had duly earned that appellation, by paying for big gills, that Donald was in that state which is sufficiently understood by the comparatively mild expression, "powerfully refreshed." Like a good many people in that happy-condition, he fancied that nobody could for a moment imagine that he was not perfectly fit for business; so he had no hesitation in at once obeying the summons of the Moderator to return to the church. Quaighorn, although about as far gone as his crony, had less faith in his own powers, or more perhaps in the penetration of others, which amounts to pretty much the same thing, so he stuck to his gill stoup. When Donald made his appearance, all eyes were directed towards him, as the "sergeant-at-arms" of the rev. court. M'Wheesht unfortunately lost his balance in trying to be too nonchalant, by wishing to insert his snuff-spoon into his mull to take a more deliberate pinch, when he might have successfully

accomplished that delicate operation by the use of his finger and thumb ; consequently he made one or two preliminary staggers, which thoroughly satisfied the court that he had been really visiting his acquaintances.

“ Where have you been ? ” sternly demanded the Moderator, rising from his seat and fixing M’Wheesht, as his snuff-spoon every now and then missed the mouth of the crooked mull, much as provoking watch keys will persist in dodging holes in the hands of some individuals at that indefinite hour when it is said to be all one after twelve.

“ Where have you been ? ” again exclaimed the Moderator.

“ Oot bye,” answered Donald.

“ Were you drinking in Kirsty Campbell’s, sir ? ”

“ Maybe ay and maybe no,” complacently replied the beadle ; and looking round the church with a drunken leer, he slowly ejaculated,

“ Ye’ve been gey an’ afthen there yersel’ ! ”

“ Take the fellow out, he’s a drunkard and liar ! ” exclaimed the Moderator, reddening like a turkey-cock ; and sitting down, he was obliged to say,

“ We must do without him. Go on, Mr Garrempey.”

Donald gave a hiccupy laugh, and staggered out of the church, to rejoin his friends at Kirsty’s.

This scene caused considerable merriment in the reverend court, which there was no attempt made to stop.

Mr Garrempey—"Well, then, Moderator, I was at the first head of the fourth objection as to the head of red hair, when this interruption took place. The second head is, that the presentee squints; the third, that his nose is too small for the size of his face, and that he blows it in a manner to which the people of Veto have not been accustomed. Now, as to the first—that is the red hair, I must say, I never read or heard of that having been stated as an objection before."

Dr Browser—"He could cut off his hair, and wear a wig of a different colour; that would, I think, obviate the objection."

Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"That would be the unkindest cut of all, and could only be justified by sheer necessity."

Mr Garrempey—"My client would never consent to sail under false colours."

Rev. Mr Bouncer—"What do you say then to a bare pole?"

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"I think he should cut his stick."

Mr Garrempey—"I have no idea of my client becoming a 'stickit minister,' sir! Some people,

I know, would have been entitled to that distinction, except for the Disruption."

Here the Rev. Messrs Havral Clash, M'Sneevish, Sneckdraw, Mackintrowsers, and Skirleywhitter set up a dismal howl, and insisted upon the agent for the presentee going on with his case, without making offensive remarks.

Dr Browser—"Go on, Mr Garrempey."

Mr Garrempey—"With regard to the objection as to the alleged squint, it was not said that it interfered, in any way, with his eyesight."

Dr Browser—"That objection's all in my eye—"

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"I beg you pardon; I—I—think that the eye is a matter of great importance—squinting distracts the attention, particularly if he opens his eyes during prayer; and I, for one, will not wink at an—"

Moderator—"Ay, ay, but let the agent go on."

Mr Garrempey—"Well, then, Moderator, we now come to the third head, being the question of nose—and to the statement as to the presentee not blowing it as they do in the parish of Veto. This allegation is also very vague. They ought to have told us how they blow the nose there, and in what respect the presentee's blowing was different from their blowing of nose. Who knows what is meant by this statement? I don't; nor do I think the question of

nose of any importance, although I shall probably find a good many ‘noes’ against my opinion.”

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—“I differ entirely from the learned speaker. I theenk the question o’ nose o’ great consequence. It’s an important member o’ the face, and if it’s too small, a minister would become—”

Dr Totty M’Killrussell—“A spectacle to his hearers, I suppose?”

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—“Jist so, doctor. I read onceit in a book o’ history that the Emperor Napoleon used to say, ‘Gie me a man wi’ plenty o’ nose.’ Noo, I don’t see why the people o’ Veto shouldna’ get a presentee wi’ plenty o’ nose, and—”

Dr Browser—“In that case, it might be possible to say, with Cowper,

‘Between eyes and nose a sad contest arose ;
The spectacles set them unhappily wrong.
The point in dispute then, as all the world knows,
Was to which the said spectacles ought to belong.’ ”

Dr Totty M’Killrussell—“Of course, but as matters stand here it would not. In the first place, the spectacles would, perhaps, be of little use to the eyes, on account of the squint ; and, in the second place, they could not sit upon the nose, on account of its being too small.”

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—"I don't see hoo the maiter o' nose can be got ower at all, even supposing—".

Dr Browser—"That there was a bridge to it, eh?"

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—"I won't be interrupted in this mainer by Dr Browser; he always stops me when a'm speaking."

Moderator—"I don't see why, upon this matter of nose, Mr Mackintrowsers should be so often snubbed. Let him go on."

Dr Browser—"He may blow his trumpet as long as he likes for me."

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—"I was jist going to say, that some people nicht theenk this a maiter o' leetle importance; but for ma pairt, I theenk it's a consideration—"

Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"Not to be sneezed at, I suppose, Mr Mackintrowsers?"

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—"Jist so, doctor. That's all I've to say, Moderator."

Mr Garrempey—"I have no further observation to make as to this objection."

Mr Poind—"I think the objection so clear, that I deem it unnecessary to trouble the Presbytery with any remarks."

Parties being removed, the Presbytery, after reasoning, "In respect, the presentee can cut off his hair,

and wear a wig, unanimously repel the objection as to hair, but, *quoad ultra*, by a majority sustain the objection, Dr Totty M'Killrussell, Dr Brower, and the Rev. Mr Bouncer dissenting." Which finding was protested, appealed against, and acquiesced in *utsupra*.

Mr Garrempey—"The next objection, which is the fifth, is as follows :—

" The presentee has not attended to his parochial duties in the parish of Lochspelding. In particular, he has avoided every opportunity of walking when he could get a lift in a cart or gig, and has thus shown his inability to traverse such a parish as Veto; besides, he sometimes resides out of his own parish."

Mr Garrempey—"Now, Moderator, I have had to complain of vagueness in every one of the previous objections. The vagueness of this one must be apparent to everybody, except to those whose minds may be made up to find everything relevant which is stated against the presentee."

Mr M'Cringer—"Moderator, I must protest against such language. It is an insult to the Presbytery, to say that any one comes here with his mind made up to find everything relevant."

Mr Garrempey—"If the cap doesn't fit, there's no necessity for your putting it on."

A voice—"It fits him ower weel; it's pinching him!"

"Seelence in the coort, or a'll pit ye oot!" roared out Donald M'Wheesht, who had come back perfectly sober.

This wonderful transformation scene was the work of Mr Charles Edward Puff, the *soi disant* foreign correspondent of a famous London daily, which claims to be a cadet of the great house of Jupiter. Charley was then doing North Britain unknown, as he said, to the fashionable world of Paris. He apparently had no difficulty, on the supposition of his account of himself being correct, in keeping up his Parisian correspondence from the highlands of Scotland. One thing at least was certain, that he regularly received from London a copy of that exceedingly useful paper, *L'International*. It would, if one could trust to Charley's estimate of himself, have created quite a sensation on the Quai D'Orsay, had it been known that he had deserted his post, resulting probably in a panic on the Bourse and the interpellation of the British Ambassador.

But of Charley and his doings is the record not to be found in the next chapter? Meantime, it will suffice to state here that, during his sojourn at Porterbier, he had taken an unmistakable interest in the outs and ins of the Veto case. Whether it was on this account, or from the peculiar attractions of the "inns" and Kirsty Campbell's "public," or from all com-

bined, that Charley made a longer stay than he intended in Porterbier, it is not easy to say, but certain it is that—result of a pretty early and late attendance at these two celebrated establishments—he had formed a number of miscellaneous acquaintances, none of whom he would have willingly introduced to the Tuileries, even *par la porte de derrière*, which some people were wicked enough to insinuate was his own mode of entrance thereto, and whom he certainly would have avoided in the environs of Compiègne. He had of course fraternised with Mr Gabby Garrempey, who, he admitted, was a scholar and a wit, wonderful to say, in spite of being only a Scottish lawyer. He entertained for Huistan pretty much the same feelings of esteem as the inhabitants of Lilliput did for Gulliver, but he had a thorough regard for Donald M·Wheesht, which almost culminated in adoration, after the finished way in which he had disposed of the Moderator. If the truth must be told, Charley had materially contributed to the disgrace which had overtaken his favourite, by “shouting” too extensively, as they do at the diggings, by way of treating all hands to unlimited mutchkins of Kirsty’s “double strong,” of which it is only fair to say that Charley, with the proverbial English pluck, did not decline to take what Huistan called “his ain guid whack.” It was natural therefore that he should endeavour to



and wear a wig, unanimously repel the objection as to hair, but, *quoad ultra*, by a majority sustain the objection, Dr Totty M'Killrussell, Dr Brower, and the Rev. Mr Bouncer dissenting." Which finding was protested, appealed against, and acquiesced in *utsupra*.

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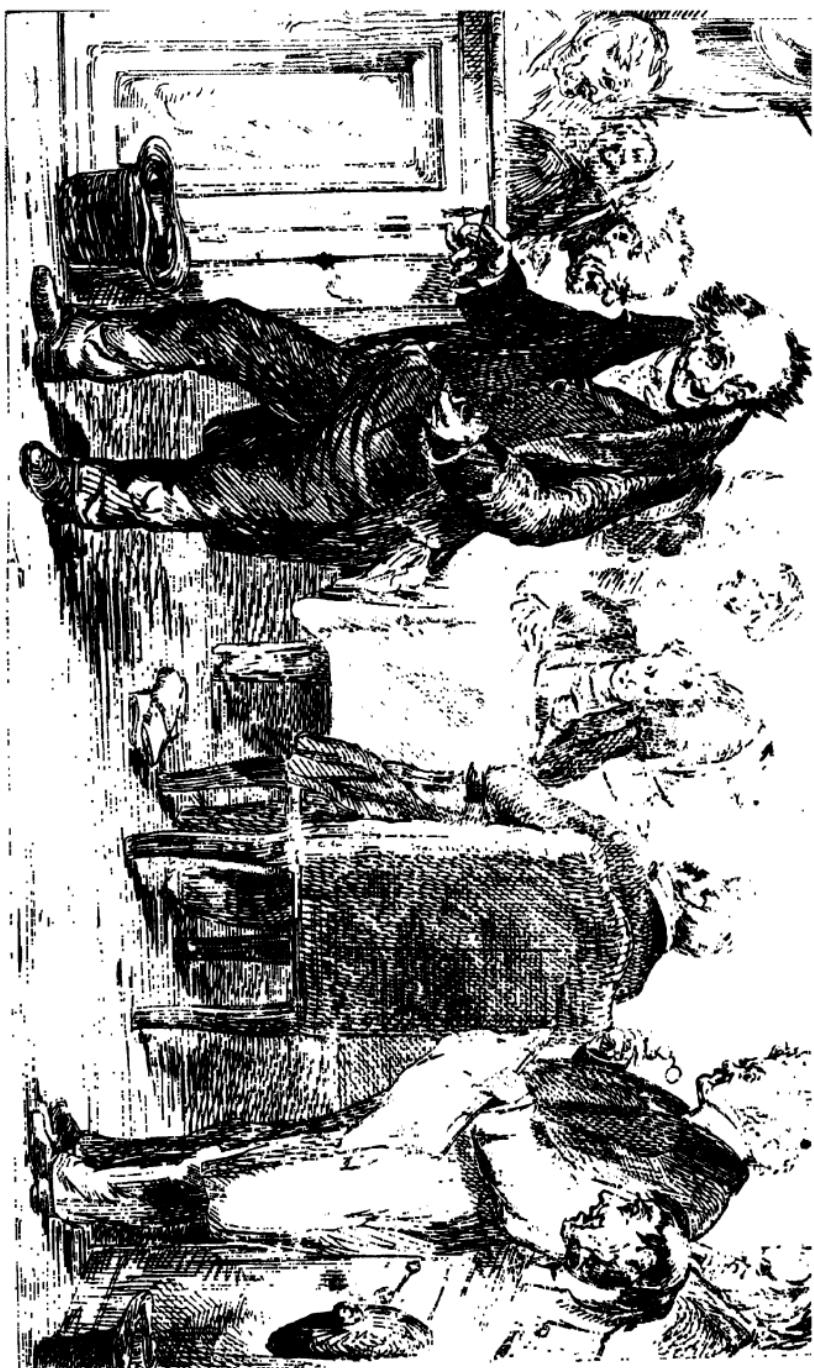
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This wonderful transformation scene was the work of Mr Charles Edward Puff, the *soi disant* foreign correspondent of a famous London daily, which claims to be a cadet of the great house of Jupiter. Charley was then doing North Britain unknown, as he said, to the fashionable world of Paris. He apparently had no difficulty, on the supposition of his account of himself being correct, in keeping up his Parisian correspondence from the highlands of Scotland. One thing at least was certain, that he regularly received from London a copy of that exceedingly useful paper, *L'International*. It would, if one could trust to Charley's estimate of himself, have created quite a sensation on the Quai D'Orsay, had it been known that he had deserted his post, resulting probably in a panic on the Bourse and the interpellation of the British Ambassador.

But of Charley and his doings is the record not to be found in the next chapter? Meantime, it will suffice to state here that, during his sojourn at Porterbier, he had taken an unmistakable interest in the outs and ins of the Veto case. Whether it was on this account, or from the peculiar attractions of the "inns" and Kirsty Campbell's "public," or from all com-

bined, that Charley made a longer stay than he intended in Porterbier, it is not easy to say, but certain it is that—result of a pretty early and late attendance at these two celebrated establishments—he had formed a number of miscellaneous acquaintances, none of whom he would have willingly introduced to the Tuileries, even *par la porte de derrière*, which some people were wicked enough to insinuate was his own mode of entrance thereto, and whom he certainly would have avoided in the environs of Compiègne. He had of course fraternised with Mr Gabby Garrempey, who, he admitted, was a scholar and a wit, wonderful to say, in spite of being only a Scottish lawyer. He entertained for Huistan pretty much the same feelings of esteem as the inhabitants of Lilliput did for Gulliver, but he had a thorough regard for Donald M'Wheesht, which almost culminated in adoration, after the finished way in which he had disposed of the Moderator. If the truth must be told, Charley had materially contributed to the disgrace which had overtaken his favourite, by “shouting” too extensively, as they do at the diggings, by way of treating all hands to unlimited mutchkins of Kirsty’s “double strong,” of which it is only fair to say that Charley, with the proverbial English pluck, did not decline to take what Huistan called “his ain guid whack.” It was natural therefore that he should endeavour to



rehabilitate the fallen beadle in ecclesiastical circles, and with this praiseworthy intention he had given Donald a glass and a-half of pure French vinegar, got him to wash his head, face, and chest, and to place his feet in cold water. The effect was, as Donald said, "jist miraculous," and he returned to his duty, if not a wiser, at least a soberer man.

"Seelence in the coort, I say!" again called out Donald.

"Gae ower tae Kirsty's an' hae anither gill wi' the ruling elder an' yer English freen!" exclaimed some one not far from where the beadle was standing. Donald looked round, but could fix upon nobody as the offender.

"Wha said that?" he ejaculated, with a look of admirable indignation.

No answer.

"It's really too bad," said the Moderator. "Go on, Mr Garrempey. I think, Mr M'Cringer," he added, in a low voice, "you needn't be so thin-skinned. You see what it leads to."

Mr Garrempey—"Under this objection, if held relevant, it will be competent for the objectors to prove non-residence in the parish."

Mr Poind—"And we mean to do so."

Mr Garrempey—"You do. Thank you, for admitting it. Let me direct your attention, Moderator,

to the first section of Lord Aberdeen's Act. It provides that objectors are entitled to state any reasons against the settlement of a minister which do not infer matter of charge against the presentee, to be prosecuted and followed out according to the forms and discipline of the church. Now, by the terms of the Act of Parliament 8 James VI., c. 132, non-residence infers deprivation from the ministry. His alleged non-residence is actually part of the objection, and it is admitted that they intend to prove it. I submit that it would be monstrous to sustain the relevancy of such an objection."

Mr Poind—"I maintain that we are entitled to have the objection found relevant."

Parties being removed, the Presbytery, after reasoning, by a majority sustain the relevancy of the objection. The same parties as before dissented, protested and appealed, and acquiesced *ut supra*.

Mr Garrempey—The sixth objection is as follows:

"The presentee is not disposed to be charitable, for, in the opinion of the objectors, the Psalms he selected were intended to irritate and insult those who might think it a Christian duty to oppose him. His prayers had no unction, and he opened his eyes so frequently, that, with his peculiar squint, he mesmerized several aged and infirm females, who were found so fast asleep, that they could with difficulty be roused

to consciousness, although various passes were made under their noses, with potent snuff-boxes and pungent vinaigrettes."

"The only relevant part of this objection is as to the prayers. The rest is so clearly irrelevant that I will not take up the time of the court with discussing it."

Mr Poind—"I contend that the whole objection is perfectly relevant."

Parties being removed, the Presbytery, after reasoning, by a majority sustained the relevancy of the objection, the parties formerly dissenting repeating their dissent, except as to the prayers. Protested against and acquiesced in *ut supra*.

Mr Garrempey—"The seventh objection is as follows:—

"The presentee's delivery had more the appearance of recitation than a direct appeal to the understanding and heart, and the discourses appeared to have been got up for the occasion, but were not appropriate. They were unconnected and hurried. Besides, the presentee did not, on two occasions, read any portion of the Holy Scriptures at the commencement of the services, as enjoined by the Directory of the Church of Scotland."

"This objection, as stated, is not relevant, but there are the elements of relevancy in it. I demur entirely to the latter point of it."

Mr Poind—"I maintain it to be entirely relevant."

The Presbytery, after reasoning, by a majority, found the objection relevant.

Protested and appealed against, and acquiesced in *ut supra*.

Mr Garrempey—"The eighth and last objection is as follows:—

"That the presentee has endeavoured to make himself too agreeable to the parishioners of Veto, and resides in an inn or hotel, in the village of Porterbier, contrary to the dignity and character of a minister of the gospel."

"This objection is totally irrelevant. The only objections competent to be entertained by the Presbytery are those sanctioned by Lord Aberdeen's Act, and this is not one of them."

Mr Poind—"I contend that we are entitled to prove all facts and circumstances connected with the presentee's mode of acting and living, and as such, the objection is clearly relevant."

Dr Browser—"Do you mean to say that the presentee was not entitled to live at an inn?"

Mr Poind—"He might have gone to private lodgings."

Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"Why should he have gone to private lodgings?"

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"It would have been more respectable."

Here Huistan, the respectability of whose hostelry seemed to be in peril, could not restrain himself.

"Dae ye mean tae say that ma 'Inns' is no respectable, sir? It's a' verra weel for you an' a wheen mair o' ye, tac get yer meat an' drink frae yer freens there (pointing to the pew where Puncheon and the other objectors were seated), an' yer horses pit up; but ma hoose is jist as respectable, an' may be as comfortable as ony o' theirs. Mony a time ye've come there yersel' whan ye couldna' get a denner ony ither place for naething."

Another scene now ensued between the contending parties, amidst the laughter and merriment of the audience. Huistan's blood was now up.

"A'll mak ye pey for yer words, sir, aboot ma hoose."

M'Cringer knew the litigious disposition of M'Huistan, so he at once said that he had nothing to say against the respectability of his house, but quite the contrary.

Parties being removed, the Presbytery, after reasoning, by a majority sustained the objection as relevant, Dr Totty M'Killrussell, Dr Brower, and the Rev. Mr Bouncer dissenting.

Protested, and appealed against, and acquiesced in *ut supra*.

The Moderator asked the agent for the presentee whether he admitted or denied the truth of the objections, in so far as found relevant.

Mr Garrempey—"I deny their truth."

The following judgment was then pronounced:—The Presbytery admit the objections in so far as found relevant to proof, and allow the parties a conjunct probation; and appoint this day fortnight, at twelve o'clock noon, in the Parish Church of Veto, for the objectors to proceed with their proof, and grant diligence against witnesses and havers. Which finding the agent for the presentee protested against, and appealed, and the agent for the objectors acquiesced in *ut supra*.

The Presbytery adjourned to meet at Veto upon the above date.

Closed with prayer.

(Signed) T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

So closed the farce called "Settling the relevancy of objections" in a Presbytery court of the Church of Scotland.

It may be as well to explain, that the phrase "parties being removed," does not mean that they are actually removed, but that they are held to be so by a sort of *fictio juris*. They are thus supposed to be out

of court after having finished their arguments, while the Presbytery are debating the matter themselves, but as will have been seen, this absence from the scene of action is only imaginary.

We have been thus minute in order to depict not merely the scenes which have occurred, and will always occur in church courts so long as the present monstrously absurd system lasts, but to show the exact procedure of these remarkable tribunals.

CHAPTER XV.

“OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER” AMONG THE HIGHLAND INN-KEEPERS—MR CHARLES EDWARD PUFF, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC CORRESPONDENT OF THE DAILY FLABBERGASTER—HIS DOINGS AT THE CLACHAN OF BRACKANECKORTWA AND THE “INNS” AT PORTERBIER—NOCTES HUISTANIANÆ CHRISTIANÆQUE.

GARREMPEY, on getting out of the close and fetid atmosphere of the church, was strongly tempted to adjourn to Kirsty Campbell’s “public,” if he could only fall in with some congenial soul, to keep him company, for, with all his failings, he never drank alone. He had missed his crony, Huistan, as the meeting “skaled,” and was looking about to see if he could find him, an operation not often of a troublesome kind, for you had merely to look above the heads of ordinary mortals, if that were not in itself an impossibility, to discern the head, shoulders, and almost the *pedamenta* themselves, of the Celtic Goliath, but Huistan was nowhere to be seen. As luck would have it, the wandering eye of the now somewhat drouthy lawyer, lighted upon the slim and elegant figure of Mr Charles Edward Puff, dressed in a suit of orthodox Brougham check, with a rakish glengarry

floating gracefully upon the crest of a wavy curl of his glossy black hair. Charley was standing with his back to a tree, smoking an intensely black, and unreasonably short "cutty," the head of which looked, at a distance, like a flashy jet ornament dangling from his nose, suggesting the idea of the private Secretary of the king of the Zulus, in his latest outfit from Moses and Son, an airing of himself in some favourite contiguity of shade. Charley, while thus *fumant paisiblement sa pipe*, was regarding with marked attention, the droves of "gentlemen lifters," as they issued from the kirk, who, he no doubt considered were carrying a dangerously metaphysical expression in their countenances, while sullenly trotting in the direction of their respective wigwams.

Garrempey's countenance brightened up.

We should have said that Charley and he had speedily ripened into warm friends, although, in many respects, they were the very antipodes of each other. Charley was an intense Cockney, aggravated, if that were possible, by a *dégage* air of *aplomb*, copied from the French. He was born, as he often boasted, within sound of Bow Bells, and, as a necessary consequence, possessed in an eminent degree, the tendency with which every Englishman utters his first squeak on earth, to wit, an overmastering tendency to chaff. Garrempey, on the other hand, had all the attig

flavour about him of "Sweet Edinburgh" (which, alas! we do not "smell the noo,") as it existed in the days when "Auld Reekie," might fairly claim to be called the modern Athens. There was a mellow "caller on" ring about his voice, delightfully reminiscent of oyster suppers, and intellectual fish dinners at Newhaven. He could chaff too, when he liked, but his banter was not of that irrepressible description which seems to carry away a Southron, body and soul, whether he will or no. Garrempey preferred to converse—or chaff if you will—over a bowl of steaming punch, when everything was snug for the night, and could do it all the better for being pretty smartly irritated by the darts of a nimble picador like Puff.

Charley had made rapid progress in his Scottish education. He had become quite as good a judge—and let us add, quite as efficient a drinker of the various whiskies distilled in Veto, as the redoubtable Huistan himself, a feat which it had been the height of his ambition to accomplish; for it seems to be part of the instinct of an Englishman—particularly of a Cockney—to stop short at nothing to equal a Scotsman; if possible, to beat him in his own country, whether, by so doing, he makes himself ridiculous or not. There are some people who *will* make themselves *Hibernis hiberniores*. If we were not

committing a bull, we would say, that John does that pretty often in Scotland, if nowhere else. He has somehow got it into his head, that he will not be beaten by a Scotsman, even in things Scotch; and it is only justice to say, that it is a moot point whether John does not, upon the whole, come off best, even in that competition; for after he has once fairly got over the bagpipes—into the proper manipulation of the kilt and its accessories, and has satisfactorily trained himself by drinking whisky and swallowing oatmeal porridge, we know, from bitter experience, that he is not a customer to be encountered rashly, even by such a veteran as Long John himself, and he was a salamander! You may reasonably expect to find John in the highlands, dancing the reel of Hullachan, with as much *abandon*, and as completely oblivious of the fact—or equally regardless of the consequences, that he is entirely breechless, as Vich Ian Mhor himself; but you will rarely, if ever, find him kicking out his toes in an Irish jig, twirling a shillelah, and burrabooring with Paddy at Donnybrook, or contorting his body with hideous grimaces, in order to imitate Mossoo frenzied with the *Cancan* at Mabille. Whether this spirit of emulation on the part of John arises from a feeling of latent respect for Sandy himself, and his barbarous institutions, or is a remnant of the old combative

spirit which animated the two races in days happily long gone by, it may be difficult to say, but with all his abuse of Sawney, he cannot help at times showing that he has something of a sneaking regard for him at bottom,—at all events he is not disposed to allow anybody else to wallop him with impunity.

Charley fairly won the admiration of Huistan, not merely by his prowess as a drinker, but by having actually got the better of that astute individual in a desperate dispute with regard to the purity of his own Gaelic. Charley had, for the short time he had been in the country, acquired a wonderful command of the phraseology of that highly poetic and somewhat impracticable dialect, in which, we are sorry to say, he had succeeded in being able to swear to Huistan's perfect satisfaction. His proficiency—not, however, in this latter respect, was in a great measure owing to his having mixed pretty freely among the lasses of Porterbier; but it is due to their and Charley's fair fame to say that, for rapid progress in the language of Ossian, he confined himself to a strictly British use of that rather seductive *Dictionnaire*, which is invariably recommended in the Quartier Latin to those impatient foreigners, *qui veulent apprendre bien vite la langue Française*. If any amount of smacking the rosy lips of the lasses of the clachan could impress the pronunciation upon Charley's tongue, he ought to have

been a thorough proficient, by a mode which, although hardly consonant with the rules of the parish school system in Scotland, Charley found to be most efficacious in enabling him to mouth the jaw-breaking consonants of one of the most venerable, and, beautiful of languages.

These premises being granted, it will not be surprising to be told that Charley should, as a necessary consequence, have arrived at a point of familiarity at which Garrempey did not feel it to be at all an impertinence when he unexpectedly heard himself one evening addressed by Charley, in the course of mixing his fifth tumbler, by the free and easy appellative "Gabby;" nor would it be possible to sit in the company of the lively *litterateur* for half-an-hour, without being compelled, in spite of any resolution to the contrary, to accost himself by the name he liked best—"Charley." By these endearing terms was the intercourse between this odd pair and their common friend, Huistan, kept up, except during the existence of a feud, which, it is as well to confess, broke out pretty often, resulting commonly in the parties suddenly finding themselves addressing each other with deliberato politeness, as,—Mr Garrempey, and—Mr Puff, varied in the case of Huistan, who, however, never quarrelled with the former, by his changing "Chairloy," his usual mode of address, into that of "Maister Chairles,"

an alternative style which always indicated that Huistan was "ony thing but weel pleesed" with his guest's conduct.

The *entente cordiale*, although experience proved that it ran imminent risk of being shattered at a particular stage of the evening, was, however, when broken, always restored by that mysterious influence which you are told is created by taking "a hair of the dog that bit you," so that, cemented by this powerful coherent, it would have been difficult for a stranger to say where the crack could have been, in those hinges of friendship which we so often devoutly wish may never rust. If, therefore, that much abused liquor—whisky, did, as was often alleged, poison the concord and harmony of the social meetings of these three worthy compotators, it at least possessed a quality not common to all toxical agents; for, granting that the antidote to some poisons is, by a mysterious dispensation of Providence, to be found in the very locality in which the virus is produced, usquebaugh, that glorious *aqua vitae*, was specially designed, at the moment it was distilled from the *arbor vitae*, in the garden of Eden, to possess the valuable property of being an antidote to itself! The evidence upon this particular point, as well as upon that of Gaelic having been the vernacular tongue of Adam and Eve, is so overwhelmingly clear, that there is not

the least chance of its ever being seriously disputed by anybody, except perhaps by some rabid tee-totaler. The virtues of whisky have often been sung by bards of great renown. Indeed there would be no difficulty in showing that the dear old toper, Anacreon himself, had chiefly that soul-inspiring liquor in his eye, or perhaps in his head after having wet the other eye, in some of his most charming odes, and not the fusionless wine of Samos. At all events, the odds are that had he confined his potations to genuine Ferrintosh, or, as Huistan would have recommended, Ardbeg, he wouldn't have been choked by the stone of a grape at four-score, nor have had a statue voted to him in the citadel of Athens, representing him as an old drunken man singing, with marks of dissipation and intemperance depicted on his countenance. We question whether Anacreon or any other bard ever more graphically sang the praises of liquor than a local bard of Huistan's acquaintance, who composed a song in praise of whisky, which Charley insisted upon the worthy landlord singing as regularly after the brewing of the first tumbler as he himself asked a benediction over his favourite roast beef, for Charley was not, in this respect at least, graceless in his behaviour. It would be a pity that this *cantilena bibatoria* should be lost to posterity, and we will, therefore, give it as nearly as possible in the very words—

as we took them down from his lips—of the sweet singer of Porterbier himself:—

“TA PRAISE O' WHUSKEY.”

AIR—*Neil Gow's Farewell to Whisky.*

Ta praise o' whuskey she will kive,
 An' wish ta glaiss aye in her neiv,
 She disna' socht what she could live,
 Wisoot a wee drap whuskey, O !

For whuskey is ta sing ma laad,
 Tae cheer her heart whane'er she's saud,
 An' trive bad sochts awa' like mad,
 Pheugh ! tere's naething like goot whuskey, O !

O ! whuskey's goot, an' whuskey's gran',
 Ta pestest pheesic efer fan',
 She wishes she had in her han',
 A great pig shar o' whuskey, O !

Ta leddies tey will glower an' blink,
 Whane'er tey'll saw't a man in trink,
 Put by themsel' tey'll nefer wink,
 At four pig trams o' whuskey, O !

Charley's professed object in making an expedition to the highlands, was to enjoy some quiet fishing, but in reality to overawe the highland innkeepers, the *Daily Flabbergaster*, from which he professed to be accredited, having suddenly discovered that it had

been called upon, in the interests of Providence, to equalize the tariff of European hotels. Charley, in order to fulfil this mission, was obliged to assume as many disguises as Proteus, and to be equally dodgy in answering troublesome questions as to his own identity. Not Aristaeus himself, would have succeeded in getting anything out of him, unless, indeed, he and Charley had fallen in with one another among the Delilahs of Porterbier. Now, he appeared as the writer of a letter in the great *Daily*, signed "An indignant traveller," giving a harrowing picture of the systematic plunder carried on at an establishment situated at the summit of the pass of Brackaneckortwa, at an elevation somewhat less than the city of Quito, where, having found nothing high except the establishment itself—everything in fact, disgustingly cheap, for a place so remote from the ordinary haunts of man—he had happily discovered, on the eve of departing, that the eggs were charged in his bill at the atrocious price of a penny a-piece. Charley immediately put himself through a violent course of hard swearing at the astonished waiter, preparatory to composing a crushing letter. In vain was it explained by the trembling garçon, disconsolate at the remote chance of receiving even a *pour boire* from so irate a guest, that eggs had "riz" in consequence of the same operation having been performed by the

fowls, who had at that particular time of the year left their nests on strike, and could not be egged up to the laying point, although they had been first judiciously locked out, to starve them into work, and had afterwards been gratified with unrestricted corn. Charley's anger was not to be allayed, and he horrified the dejected "yez, zir," by telling him that they might easily have been chaffed into it, but that the whole affair was merely a device of the unconscionable landlord, to compel the unfortunate Philistines who came under his yoke, to shell out.

At another time Charley's letter appeared to proceed from a henpecked paterfamilias, who had been led by the evil spirit of his wife into the wilderness, where, for an indefinite period of time, he had been cruelly fleeced by that uncanny personage, "Ta Pherson." He drew, by way of contrast, vivid pictures of the comfort and economy of some unpronounceable *Gasthoff*, near an unheard of *Brunnen*, the precise locality of which was indicated as being situated somewhere between the Thuringian Forest and the lower Rhine, where Chateau Margaux, St Jullien, St Estephe, and God knows how many other scented stuffs could be had at the rate of a yard of pump water. He depicted in glowing colours some deliciously cheap and cozy *estaminet*, at the foot of some impossible *col*, perfectly inaccessible to Professor

Tyndall or the Alpine Club, or to anybody else, for the obvious reason, that to scale its giddy peaks it would have been necessary to climb the heights of Charley's imagination; or perhaps he caused your mouth to water with the dainties to be found in a lovely *auberge* of the Val de Grâce, not to be found either in Murray, or Baedeker, nor, most provoking of all, in the locality itself. But the most mischievous cut which Charley delivered, in the course of his crusade against the unfortunate highland innkeepers, was the *coup de grâce* which he bestowed upon that hapless wight, "Ta Pherson" himself, in damning, what he confessed was very good sherry, by making it appear as "undoubtedly *cheri*," knowing very well, the sly rogue, that John Bull always associated that word with the sound of something excessively dear, and which had a remarkable tendency to cause him to button up his breeches pockets.

After all, Charley's heart was really in the highlands. He loved its whisky, especially Ardbeg, which he declared was utterly guiltless of producing sensations of matutinal remorse, but it is an open question whether it would not have been better for Charley in the end had there been added to it, after being racked, or in the process of mixing for the retail trade, a few judicious racking headaches; but as Huistan, to use an old phrase, did not retail evil

spirits, Charley enjoyed the rare privilege of being able to rise with the lark as brisk as a bee, after having drank with the owl till he was, as he himself admitted, frequently as blind as a bat. Charley indeed loved the highlands, its dark glens and craggy bens, its roaring streams, and even its solemn peat-haggs, where, in certain moods, he would sit, sometimes for almost a day, without even seeing the ghost of a "lifter," deeply interested in the sober proceedings of a solitary crow, or endeavouring to come to a satisfactory understanding with a persistently skirling, and eminently vituperative peese-weep. He had serious intentions of making it up with "Ta Pherson," by organizing an extensive reading party, through a young Balliol friend, to take up its quarters next season upon the summit of Brackaneckortwa, by which time, he said, he had been assured by Dugald, the waiter, that matters would be changed for the better, as there were evident signs that the hens were beginning to feel ashamed of the discredit they had brought upon the establishment, by thier foul proceedings on a former occasion, and that they would require no more coaxing to do their duty.

It was apparent, with all his quizzing propensities, that Charley really had a weakness for Scotland and Scotsmen, particularly for that section of them whom he expected to find on his first arrival, in

all the gorgeous array of tartan plaid and eagle's plume. Although, when in a cantankerous mood, he was apt to say, that it would be a great blessing if Mr Fox, or some other eminent *entrepreneur*, would undertake, by chartering the Great Eastern, or in any other effective way, to send every Caledonian in London back to the land of cakes and brother Scots, it turned out after all that this unhallowed wish was not father to the thought, but owed its parentage to a huge figure of speech, often in the mouths but never really in the hearts of his countrymen. Charley had many friends in London who would require to go, if such a sweeping ukase went out in the land of the Philistines; and we rather imagine that his resolution would be somewhat shaken before it came to the shaking of hands at the wharf, or that, if carried out, he would occasionally be heard plaintively singing with a Cyder cellar whine, efficiently supported by a pot of Truman:—

"Will ye no come back again?"

We ought perhaps to close our notice of Charley by giving a sketch of his appearance, and something of his history, but we have good and sufficient reasons for not doing so at present, as, from sundry hints, which he unguardedly let fall on an occasion when the sixth tumbler had completely thawed away the floes of a

caution which never entirely gave way before the fifth, we are rather afraid that, emboldened by the astonishing success of his countrymen in their late *razzia* upon the domains of the Scottish dukes, Charley contemplates attacking upon the first opportunity a county where the chances of success, he is firmly persuaded, will be anything but for Lorn. Were we, therefore, to sketch Charley as he really is, we are afraid that we would be aiding and abetting him; in short, actors, or art and part in an unconstitutional attack upon the prescriptive rights of the legitimate lords of pit and gallows, for our sketch would be so flattering that it would, doubtless, decide the electors. We know Charley too well to believe that he would scruple about at once publishing it as a certificate, in the full belief that it would be vastly more efficacious as an introduction than the subtle but infelicitous credentials of Mr John Stuart Mill, which, just as effectually as if they had been ordinary millstones, succeeded not only in drowning the hapless candidates round whose necks they were hung, but that brawny dialectician and flowery letter-writer, the miller himself, although he did succeed in showing, before he sank, that the chosen of Kilmarnock, if he was not actually one of the blackest tares in the crop of Whigs, had certainly been guilty of wearing his bonnet somewhat awry.

"Well, Gabby," said Charley, in his blithest mood, leaving the tree, under the shade of which he had been smoking, and putting his blackened calumet, which, in the highlands at least, was not always one of peace, into his pocket, "what would that muscular Christian, John Knox, or honest Sandy Peden, say to the state of discipline in the Auld Kirk now ? That man M'Cringer would send them into particular fits, if they could only obtain leave of absence from tother sphere, and reappear in modern conventicles. You must get up another solemn League and Covenant to put down this iniquitous system. Beales and Bright would let you have cheap, the old machinery of the Reform League, which, failing its being disposed of to the American ambassador for Barnum's museum, is, I understand, to be sold by public auction."

"I don't care what League or Covenent is set up," said Garrempey, who looked harassed and worn out, "provided only we could overturn the League and Covenant formed against my client."

"My estimable friend, Donald M'Wheesht, gave you a good lift to-day, didn't he ?" said Charley, smiling. "Lord ! how he bowled over that Moderator, M'Slykey ! He won't be on the *qui vive* in a hurry again, as to Donald's visits to Kirsty Campbell's, I'll go bound."

"I hope Donald won't lose his place through it, Charley?" *

"Not a bit of it. M'Slykey's afraid to say anything more about it, and so are the others, for Donald says he's determined, if they do, like Samson of old, to bring down the premises upon their Calvinistic heads."

"Let's go," he continued, "and see how Kirsty's getting on. A tumbler of that cool water 'frae the wall,' with a cinder in it, would go down amazingly just now—my throat's almost choked up with Presbyterian dust, and, to use the expressive language of the village sweep, has as 'muckle need o' soopin' as Kirsty's lum.'"

"Agreed. I feel almost inclined to make a night of it here, instead of going all the way to Porterbier. I'm quite fagged and worn out."

"I'm your man, then; come! cheer up, Gabby, you'll beat these fellows yet, if there's law or common sense left in broad Scotland."

Garrempey shook his head, as they entered Kirsty's sanded parlour. "You don't know the outs and ins of an ecclesiastical case so well as I do, Charley, or you would know that it's a mere toss up in the Assembly."

"Well, we aren't much better off at home, although, certainly, we haven't this precise way of doing things. Don't let the thoughts of it spoil your appetite,

however," continued the lively Englishman, as they sat down to the tempting black-faced mutton chops which Charley had ordered to be ready at a previous visit to the "public."

"Hallo ! here's our friend, Huistan," he exclaimed, in the same cheery mood, which is one among the many good qualities of his countrymen a Scotsman most covets, and has the least chance of ever possessing. "Come in, my worthy son of Fingal, chief of lifters, we're going to have a chop, and make a night of it under the shade of the Auld Kirk ! What do you say to that, Hugh?"—giving him a thump upon his broad back, which Huistan took as complacently as would a favourite tabby, the gentle stroking of the youngest toddler of the family.

"A' richt, Chairley, but ye'll maybe ken the auld freat, 'The nearer the kirk, the farther frae grace.'"

"Can't be much nearer the last article, Hugh, than we are now," said Charley, at once beginning with "For what we are going to receive,"—

"Man, ye're an awfu' heathan, Chairley !" said Huistan, when he had finished, with a look, as to which it would be difficult to say whether it was more indicative of the chuckle or the frown.

"You English care nae mair for spiritu"—

"Don't say that, now, Hugh. Just ask my purse or the stocking in which you keep your bank account.

Either of them will tell you that I've invested pretty extensively in the spirit trade."

"Hear till him noo!" said Huistan, fairly in for a hearty laugh.

"Come along, Gabby! mix up," called out Charley, after the cloth had been removed, and the "ammunition" had been brought in. "Huistan's just clearing his tunnel for the usual overture, 'Ta praise o' Whuskey.'"

Garrempey began at last to wake up, and song and toast and brimming glass succeeded each other, as only these highly disciplined bacchanalians could make them do. By a curious psychological phenomenon, which can never probably be satisfactorily accounted for without a minute analysis of the peculiar properties of the favourite Ardbeg, everything seemed to go on smoothly, during these jolly *noctes*, until the mixing of the fifth tumbler, when, as certainly as Charley tossed off his first glass of it, something was sure to be said or done by one or other of the parties to disturb the harmony of the evening. It was curious, too, as Charley always averred that this idiosyncrasy never seemed to manifest itself, when the liquor drank was that of any other distillery. Let it be Lossit, Lagavulin, Campbeltown, or Glenlivet, all went merry as a marriage bell, but the moment Charley felt a devilish inclination to pitch into the Scotch, that moment he knew that he was drinking genuine Ardbeg,

and that he was, to a certainty, beginning his fifth tumbler. It has never been ascertained as a positive fact, however, whether the liquor itself actually communicated this bellicose disposition to its patron, or whether it was not rather the disposition of the drinker to attribute it to the liquor; but there is, at least, some presumptive evidence to support Charley's theory in the fact, that in precisely the same circumstances, failing Charley, at or about the very same time, either Garrempey or Huistan anticipated the attack, by carrying hostilities across the Border, the result being a perfect cyclone of discord, accompanied by showers of invectives of the most dangerous and alarming character, which fell incessantly from the roofs of mouths, into which nothing seemed to enter but toddy, or to issue, but abuse.

On the particular *nox* in question, Charley happened to be the party who opened fire.

"Yes," he said, with an unmistakable sneer, after having been engaged for some minutes in looking intently into his tumbler—the ominous fifth, of course—in which he must have seen some eldrich Caledonian carrying off the Elcho challenge shield, or receiving an appointment in the Indian civil service, and grinning a horrid grin of savage triumph.

"You're a peculiar people, you Scotch.—you are—Hang me! if it's possible to live with you anywhere

in comfort! You must quarrel with somebody rather than be idle. Your cursed industry must find employment, even in pulling to pieces the Auld Kirk itself. The Irish are lambs compared to you. I do expect, when I come back here again, which will only be, I suppose, when I am threatened with softening of the brain, to hear, that like the Kilkenny cats, you have eaten each other up, except the tails, which will, no doubt—as specially pointed out by the Psalmist—be found scattered at the grave's mouth, so eloquently alluded to by M'Sneevish in his last discourse."

"Ye sud hae sed, at the door o' ma whusky shop at ance, Maister Chairles, for aken brawly that's what ye're meanin'," exclaimed Huistan, whose *birse* was beginning to rise. "If ye kent yer Bible as weel's ye dae thae fallows ye ca' Homer and Shakeyspur, ye wud ken may be, that David, whas name ye tak sae aften in vain, wasna' speakin' o' tails at a', but only banes being scattered at the grave's mooth. A'm ashamed o' ye, Maister Chairles, for yer complete ignorance o' Scriptur, and that naisty takin-aff way ye hae. A'm onything but weel pleased wi' ye, Maister Chairles."

"Dear me! Mr M'Huistan," replied Charley, also standing upon his dignity, and putting off reluctantly a malicious inclination to make matters worse, until

Garrempey, who was doing what Homer was said at length to have done—to wit, nodding, awoke.

“Dear me, what’s your dander up for now?”

“It’s too grave a maiter,” said Huistan, unwittingly perpetrating a pun, “to be treated in that wey.”

“Well, well, Mr M’Huistan, if we’ve been ill-treating any subject, we have been maltreating ourselves at the same time. We’ll make no more bones about it. Let it be like tales that ne’er were told. ‘Here’s tae a’ honest Scotchmen.’” He emphasised “honest.”

“Meanin’ oor absent freens, a reckon,” said Huistan, now fairly roused. “A ken yer meanin’ be yer mumpin’. A’ll no drink’t.”

“Well, then, you may be ——”

“No, a’ll no be ——”

“What the deuce is all this about?” suddenly exclaimed Garrempey, who had been roused from his slumber by the noisy voices of his excited companions.

“Aboot?” said Hustan; “Ye may weel ask that. It’s Maister Chairles there, takin’ advantage o’ me because ye’re asleep, an’ abuisin oor country, as he kent weel that a wasna’ sae able as ye are tae tackle him.”

“Oh! indeed,” said Garrempey, “at his old tricks again? What’s the grievance now? Is it the lion

and the unicorn again, or the Wallace monument, or have they given any other government appointment to a Scotchman?"

"Ou, he's jist been saying, wi' ane o' thaë infernal sneers o' his, that we're a pecooliar people, an' has been likening us tae Kilkenny cats, and Gude kens what."

"Well, if we're a peculiar people, I suppose you'll admit, Charley, that we're also zealous of good works?" said Garrempey, in his usual quiet way.

Charley saw clearly that Huistan's object was to cause his friend Gabby to fall foul of him, for they invariably went together, and he had therefore to sustain the attack of both, or at least of one encouraged by the other, for Huistan rather acted the part of a judicious bottle-holder for Garrempey, or bottle-helper, than took an active share in the controversy. Had Charley been disposed to throw oil upon the troubled waters, he could easily have done it, as matters had not procceded the length of a regular engagement, for, as yet, the skirmishers only were out; but he had no doubt that had he done so, Huistan would have at once supposed that he was showing the white feather. Charley had conceived a prodigious admiration for Huistan. He knew that he was as courageous and magnanimous as a lion, and believed him to be quite as strong. He wouldn't for the world

have risked the chance of losing, in Huistan's opinion, any portion of that bravery, the extent of which he so much admired in himself. Of the two, he would infinitely have preferred to be blamed for the grossest rashness, if it only possessed a grain of courage, than to be praised for the rarest prudence with which it was possible to associate an atom of fear. But was it not the fatal fifth tumbler? So he surlily answered,

"I don't deny your zeal, you have taken sufficient pains to let the world know all about it, and to flaunt before us, what you call the *perfervidum, ingenium, Scotorum*; but I say again, you're prudish, narrow-minded, clannish, and given over to the most zealous cultivation of trifles."

"Oh, ho!" said Garrempey, scenting like the war horse the battle, but not from afar, fumbling for his box, and going through the preparatory operation of hitching one leg over the other, sure signs of coming strife.

"What precise charge do you make against us now, Mr Puff?"

"Why, there's that absurd movement the other day, of your restless professor of Greek in Edinburgh—Blackie, and some of his congeners, heralded by a petition to the Queen, to compel us in England to call everything British instead of English—British

press, British army, British Parliament. There'll be nothing left of old England at all, if these fellows have their way of it. The roast beef of old England must become the roast beef of old Britain. We shall have to get new editions of all our standard works, expunging every allusion to England. Let's see how it would go. We'll take 'Ye mariners of England.'

"Campbell," growled forth Garrempey.

"Yes, Campbell," regrowled Charley. "What of that?"

"Old England," cynically, replied Garrempey.

"Old dot"—but Charley checked himself, and caught up the reins of his temper, which were just about slipping from his hand. He began to sing with a ludicrously correct imitation of the mode in which Huistan would certainly have sung that song—

"Ye ma-a-rinars of Bree-ee-tan."

"Tam it! Maister Chairles, are ye mockin' me?"

"Not at all, Mr M'Huistan. I'm merely trying to see how the song would answer to the new regulations proposed by Professor Blackie. We would require, I'm afraid, to ask that highly respectable and restless professor to remodel our prosody for us, which, of course, he would be very willing to do. I've no doubt he would also propose that we should read English with a strong Caledonian accent, just as he is now."

making his unfortunate students do with Homer, by getting them to read the immortal lines of the great bard, as if he had spoken a bastard dialect of Byzantine Greek, instead of Ionian."

"I'm not going to dispute with you, Mr Puff," said Garrempey, after he had carefully finished loading his left nostril with a powerful charge of Taddy, "as to the proceedings of Professor Blackie, either with regard to the petition, or the modern pronunciation of Greek, although I have no doubt he is right in both of these matters. With regard to the latter, everybody except your countrymen admits that Erasmus, whose pronunciation you follow, knew as much about the real pronunciation of Greek when he propounded it as you do about the language of the Picts. What the dialect was which Homer spoke, I don't pretend to know. As the common belief, however, is that the poor old fellow begged his bread among the Greeks, and that the brigands of some seven of their villages quarrelled about his body as vigorously as they are now doing about Crete, it is to be supposed that Homer must have been pretty well up in the various dialects of that highly intellectual and rapacious race. But what I want you to do is to reduce the charge you are making against us to a definite issue, that we may discuss it coolly and soberly." (They were now at their seventh tumbler.)

"Well, sir, I suppose you have seen the paper of yesterday? You'll find all I have to say in the second leader there."

"Ha! ha! You mean the rhapsodies of *Jupiter Junior*?"

"I mean, sir, the paper I have the honour to represent at present. It may be *Jupiter Secundus* in point of age, but, sir, allow me to say that it is *secundus nulli* in point of talent."

"Pardon me, Mr Puff. I understood from you, the other night, when I took you to be perfectly sober, that you represented no paper at present; that you were merely here on a fishing excursion. Perhaps you're the person figuring in the *Athenæum* just now?"

"How?" said Charley, getting a little red in the face, not knowing exactly what might be about to turn up.

"Listen," said Garrempey; "Sensation writer to let.—A literary gentleman, with a river of imagination, and power to drive the machinery of a sensation story, wishes work for his pen."

"I think," said Garrempey, with a provoking grin, "that answers pretty nearly to the description of one who probably learned his business upon the staff of the journal you refer to."

"Not my *forte*, Mr Garrempey—not my *forte*, I assure you," said Charley, stifly.

"Then what *is* your *forte*? I've never been able exactly to make it out. It may be the *piano-forte*, for all we can tell here. You sometimes say you are the Paris correspondent of a *London Daily*; then you say your head-quarters are London; anon you state that you are unattached, and have come here merely for fishing."

"Fishing for information, a doot, Mr Garrempey; as Rabbie Burns says,—‘a chiel’s amang ye takin’ notes.’"

"I don’t take your bank notes, Mr M’Huistan, at all events," said Charley, bitterly. "Be thankful at least for that."

Huistan understood the hint, and was silent, for Charley had not been sparing of his gold.

"Well, if you are the Paris correspondent, Mr Puff," observed Garrempey, "perhaps you’ll tell us whether you are, *cet illustre inconnu qui est si bien reçu aux Tuileries?*"

"You should have added, Mr Garrempey, when you were at it, what certain malicious countrymen of yours say—*quand il y va par la voie de la cuisine.*"

"Well, what does it matter, Mr Puff, so long as you can send us such charming *historiettes*? All roads lead to Rome, you know."

Garrempey perceived that he had struck a

vulnerable point in Charley's armour, and he resolved to improve the occasion, so he resumed—

“*Pauvre Mocguard!* I believe the correspondent was upon the most intimate terms with him, and, *ce cher Conneau*, how is the dear physician, eh ?”

The chaff was evidently getting into Charley's throat, so, to clear it off, we suppose, he gulped down nearly half the contents of his tumbler, and merely said—

“ You'd better go back, Mr Garrempey, to the point you started from. I gave you the issue you wanted in the leading article I pointed out to you. Answer it if you can.”

Huistan drank his punch in silence, unable to comprehend very well what the two dialecticians were precisely about, for they seemed suddenly to have walked over to France, and to have as quickly walked out of it, in imitation of the king of that great country, who marched his twenty thousand men up a hill, and then marched them down again.

“ Well,” observed Garrempey, “as to the petition referred to in the article, I never heard of it. I see it is stated that it was got up by ‘a few attorneys, a few country editors, a manufacturer, who doubtless makes very good broadcloth, some gentlemen who seem to be nothing in particular, and, positively, two Scotch professors.’ If it's so small an affair as that,” he con-

tinued, "it's very probable that the great majority of Scotsmen are as ignorant of, and care as little about it, as I do, and are just as indifferent to its fate as Englishmen were about the inquiry going on, some time since, in Paddington workhouse, with regard to the practice of taking the pillows from under the heads of the dying, from motives of humanity to make them go quicker."

" Got preserve us!" exclaimed Huistan.

" Well, one thing is, at least, clear to me, Mr Garrempey," said Charley, without affecting to notice Huistan's exclamation, "that while we, in England, have realized the idea of a United Kingdom, by the abandonment of all sectional and local prejudices, you have never risen even to the conception of it. The truth is, you are more provincial than Lancashire, and hardly as important. You are just as narrow-minded and ridiculously proud and impracticable, as when you built herring and haddock smacks and mud cabins, where you now build fleets of steamers and palaces of granite."

" And as prosperous as we might have been," said Garrempey, with a look of savage irony, "if your miserable jealousy hadn't ruined our Darien scheme! Is it necessary to show," he continued, "our conception of a United Kingdom, that we should tamely allow you to break the faith of a treaty which contains

the very agreement we ask you not to break, but which you most persistently try to evade? Don't suppose that all the benefits of the Union have come to us. What benefits we do enjoy, we get just as you get yours, from pretty hard work. How is it that you find so much to put right in Scotland, and so little at home, eh?"

"Well, you won't do it yourselves, so I suppose we must, not being terrified by the Calvinistic skirl which rises from Arthur's Seat and the Pentland Hills, when any poor devil in Scotland dares to have a mind of his own, and to say that you do anything wrong."

"I defy you to give any instance of such persecution as that," said Garrempey, rashly.

He saw in a moment that he had committed a fatal blunder, by the cloud of concern which appeared to be gathering on Huistan's brow, but it was too late to retract, as Charley at once exclaimed—

"You do, Mr Garrempey? Why, sir, it's only the other day that the branch of the Holy Inquisition, sitting in Glasgow, tore the wretched editor of *Good Words* from the echoes of Morven and the sound of Mull, and, unmoved by the exquisite pathos of his plaintive

'Farewell! farewell! to Funery.'

relegated him, neck and crop, to the far East, to do

penance at the shrine of St Mishan, for his heterodox opinions concerning the Decalogue, to the imminent risk of his precious life, which was only saved by a doctor's certificate,—not his own of course,—and by entering into recognizances for his good behaviour. The poor fellow has been remarkably quiet ever since, and in better health, I am glad to say, after undergoing the critical operation of being delivered from the Indian report—so much so, that his friends now begin to recognize his lineaments, in spite of the almost impenetrable capillary hedge which he has been compelled to wear round his heretical mouth, *ad vindictam ecclesiasticam*. Moreover, his speeches, upon those troublesome commandments, would have certainly shared the same fate as Buchanan's *De jure Regni, apud Scotos*, by being burnt at the foot of the Saltmarket by the common hangman, were it not that two of the most distinguished contributors to the *Words*, almost frantic at the prospect of the pickle in store for their colossal *Chef*, appeased the Commission of the General Assembly by the most solemn assurances, on the part of Government, that they would not interfere in the forthcoming Bill upon National Education, with the powers of Presbyteries over the Parochial Schools. This compromise, as is well known in metropolitan circles, was carried out by the Lord Advocate, Mr Moncrieff, very much

against his grain, but he was glad to be done with it, as he fancied that the reverend fathers would higgle for an extension of these powers, if the negotiations were kept open any longer."

"If you don't call all that persecution," said Charley, with a look of triumph, "I don't know what the word means."

"That's all very well, Mr Puff. I see your drift in this mode of treating the matter. You know that I am dealing at present merely with the attitude assumed by the *Daily Flabbergaster* towards Scotland. It's a pity your Journal hadn't exercised its ingenuity in the matter of abusing the Scotch, before the *Thunderer* himself had familiarized us with articles of a similar description, and taught us to chuckle over the laborious efforts of Englishmen to be funny at our expense, which they could very well afford to be, as they invariably took that benefit of clergy, the beauty of which consists in declining a contradictor. Immortal JOVE tried this sort of thing sometime ago, when he—I am sorry for JUNIOR's symptoms—happened unfortunately in these canicular days to be afflicted with Scotophobia, and made the groves of Olympus ring with most untoward yelping, or was perhaps maddened, as Bulls sometimes are, by the frequent waving of Cockney tartan; but finding that the little game didn't yield anything like the amusement ex-

pected; that, in short, Englishmen were not deterred from shooting grouse upon Caledonian moors, and that the Queen (God bless her!), was not prevented from seeking the quiet retreat of Balmoral, nor from patronising the highland dress, and Athole brose, why like a sensible god and journalist, as I have no doubt every London editor is, or believes himself to be, he ceased to hunt Scotsmen, *en battue*, and turned his attention to things of more importance at home."

"Indeed! Pray, what did he do?"

"Why, sir, he directed his attention to the misery of Spitalsfields, to the distress in East London, to the state of your Poor Law Unions, to the casual wards of your Poor Houses, to your enormous commercial frauds, to the low state of morality in certain of your boroughs, to the neglected state of the education of your lower classes, and to the best means of putting down garrotting. Thanks to his, and perhaps your efforts, in this latter respect, we Scotsmen may venture into Philistia without first insuring our lives, or making our wills. There are worse things, believe me, Mr Puff, out of Scotland, than long sermons or potent Ferrintosh."

"Or guid Ardbeg," exclaimed Huistan, "Got! put that's a nailer tae ye, Chairley," he continued, recovering somewhat of his good humour, for the storm seemed to be wasting its energy—*decrescere, eundo,*

"Oh! let Mr Garrempey go on; he's addressing himself to the article, not to me."

"I'm addressing myself to the point, Mr Puff, but I understand you, at any rate, to coincide in the statements contained in the article. You may be the author of it yourself, for all I know."

"Or care, either, Mr Garrempey, I suppose?"

"Or care, either, sir; you've said it. The article is neither more nor less than *mouton réchauffé*, broken meat, in fact, procured at the old shop in the square, where, I've no doubt, you also secured the left-off ink, the gall of which, like the wit it was intended to imbitter, has become attenuated by too frequent decanting."

"It's vastly easier, Mr Garrempey, to indulge in low abuse of this kind, than to answer the article itself, by writing to the editor."

"How do you know, sir, that I haven't, and that the editor has taken the aforesaid benefit of clergy? If we found him here, Mr Puff, we would oblige him to do what Bruce, as Buchanan tells us, compelled the Carmelite who was taken prisoner at Bannockburn to do, who had been engaged by King Edward to sing the praises of his expected victory over the Scots."

"Pray, what was that? I need hardly ask, however, for Buchanan, as everybody knows, knew how to fib as well as to act the fool."

“ Why, sir, the Carmelite was made to *decantare* in a different sense from your decanting. As you don’t seem to know the story, I’ll give it to you in George’s own words :—‘ *Inter captivos, deprehensus est monachus, ex eorum factione, qui, a Carmelo monte Syriae, sibi cognomen adoptarunt: is (ut illis temporibus) poeta non spernendus fuit habitus: atque ad bellum adductus, ut Anglorum victoriam versibus illustraret. Captus autem, eorum cladem (libertatis pretium) decantare est coactus: carmine plane rudi, et barbaro: sed quod illorum temporum auribus non displiceret.*’* ”

“ Now, sir, there’s a chance for you to throw your boomerang into the heart of George’s latinity, and to do the crowning business which the monk was prevented from achieving.”

“ Bah ! Porson or Parr did that long ago.”

“ Oh ! indeed—Porson or your other authority, I’m not sure which, but it doesn’t matter, for they are both upon a par, I suppose, pretended that he

* For the benefit of ordinary readers the above may be thus translated :—“ Among the captives taken, was a monk of that order which takes its name from Mount Carmel in Syria. He was, for that age, a poet of no mean pretensions, and accompanied the army that he might commemorate the victory of the English in verse. Being captured, however, he was obliged, as the price of his liberty, to celebrate their defeat, which he did in a poem rather rude and barbarous, but which sounded not unpleasant to the ears of the men of those times.”

discovered when in Edinburgh, one false quantity in Buchanan's version of the Psalms, but it was a mere invention."

" Well, certainly, in the city of false quantities he ought to have found a great many more."

" The city of false quantities?"

" Yes."

" You know the origin of that, Mr Puff?"

" Certainly. Sydney Smith immortalized you in that respect."

" Indeed. Can you tell me why?"

" Because he found them there, I suppose."

" True; but not in the way you think. Sydney, like all your countrymen, loved his belly, and, like a good many of them, he was a scholar and a wit. Scotch dinners and suppers did not seem to be upon a scale to satisfy the cravings of his clerical maw, and in a fit of indigestion, caused by having, through sheer hunger, partaken too freely of a tempting looking haggis—*faute de rosbif*, he dubbed Edinburgh the city of false quantities. That's what you didn't know before, Mr Puff. You should be ashamed, however, to bring up the name of poor Sydney, for if you had treated him properly he ought to have been made a bishop."

" It's a great pity, Mr Garrempey, he hadn't been a Scotchman. In that case you wouldn't have had

it in your power to accuse us of that, for he would certainly have got an appointment."

"*In partibus infidelium*, I dare say."

"No, sir; in the parts which have been assigned to the Archbishop of Canterbury."

"Indeed. You don't happen to be aware, Mr Puff, do you, of the precise reason which induced Mr Disraeli to make that appointment?"

"Because Dr Tait was a Scotchman, of course."

"Don't you believe it, sir. Mr Disraeli has no love for the Scotch, for two reasons: first, because he can't humbug them as he can the Buckinghamshire farmers and the old nobility, and—"

"I dare say not. One Jew doesn't generally try it on with another."

"Thank you; we shall let that pass just now. The second is, that the Scotch have done more harm to the Conservative cause than either your countrymen or the Irish. Disraeli, with that far-seeing eye of his, saw that the English mind was affected, in some degree, with that peculiar melancholy, which had made such a dull dog of Paddy, proceeding, as the ex-Premier so sagaciously inferred, from the depressing moisture arising from the heavy swell of the Atlantic, and he considered that it would be necessary to find some excitement for your countrymen—something, in short, to divert the attention of the English

press into a channel which would rouse national feeling, and punish the Scotch Liberals. Knowing—for what is it that Disraeli doesn't know?—that the old stock of grievances and invective was about worn out, he resolved to play a bold card—as he generally does—to cap the list, in fact, by giving the Archbishop's hat to Dr Tait."

"Very unfair to Mr Disraeli, sir. I have no doubt his real motive was, that as the Church of England possesses a somewhat exuberant udder, and more than one teat, it would only be an act of charity to let one of them be sucked by a Scotchman."

"Weel, a declare! Mr Garrempey," said Huistan, who had nearly lost his breath, "that coo's the gowan! A doot he's got us noo."

"Let us be thankful, Huistan, he didn't say that the Scotchman, having got hold of one teat, would be certain to have the udder too."

"Well, if I didn't say it, I, at least, thought it. I expect to live long enough to see the whole bench of bishops occupied by your countrymen, who, I repeat again, are a narrow-minded, intolerant, and bigoted pack, who attach a ridiculous importance to matters which may have had a meaning once, but are mere platitudes now. If things are to be called English, why, they *will* be called English, in spite of

all you can do or say to the contrary. Just as surely as the English will eat up your Gaelic—”

“Got! I railly believe they wud eat up onything ; put Got forbid l!” said Huistan, with pious horror, “that they sud devoor the Gaalic—that wud be maist onnastral, an’ in fac onreesonable.”

“And highly indigestible, too,” said Charley, fairly forced into good humour by the seriousness which his last speech had produced in Huistan’s face, but particularly as the eighth tumbler had now come into play, which, failing the seventh, usually put matters all straight, “but, as surely,” he continued, “as the Gaelic will be improved off the face of the earth, so will the phrase “English” eat up the phrase “British.”

“Well, perhaps so,” said Garrempey, with a sigh for the fate of the red lion, and the glory of Auld Reekie; “but you must admit, Charley, that it’s most unfair of you to break the faith of Treaties?”

“Bah! Treaties are like pie crust, made to be broken. You can’t legislate for posterity, except for the one or two generations you can yourself hold in leading strings. You can’t mortgage, by Treaties, the wills and dispositions of the millions that are to be born some two or three hundred years hence.”

“No ; but you can set them a good example.”

“We set them the best example we can. We give

fair play to the course of events. We neither force on, nor retard the progress of ideas, nor attempt to lead the fashions of speech any more than those of dress. If it was part of a Treaty of Union, made a hundred and fifty years ago, that a cap was to be eternally called a *mutch*, for the gratification of the Scotch, do you suppose we could prevent the ladies now-a-days from calling it a bonnet if they chose ?"

"Then you admit that you have broken the Treaty of Union ?"

"I admit nothing without proof and argument. You have not satisfied me that you are right in your contention."

"Well, then," said Garrempey, having succeeded, after several misses, in loading his right nostril with a full charge of Taddy, and having seen that his tumbler was well and duly replenished, "once for all, let me state the case for the Plaintiff."

"Go it, Gabby ! Huistan, call the case Sandy M'Teevish *versus* John Bull."

"A' richt, Chairley. O, yes ! O, yes ! an' anither O, yes ! That's three ca's."

"Now, Gabby, since Huistan has called the roll, open your ports for action, but avoid personalities."

"No fear, Charley ; I mean to fight hard, but I'll fight fair. Now, how stands the case ? You will, of course, admit the patent fact, that rather better than

one hundred and fifty years ago, John Bull and Sandy M'Teevish considered it to be for their mutual advantage to enter into a Treaty of Union?"

"Did they, railly?" earnestly inquired Huistan, whose intellect was not exactly in its sharpest state just at that particular stage of the evening.

"*Heus tu! mon enfant, taisez vous,* and let Gabby go on," said Charley, now in what Garrempey called his daftest mood.

"What's that ye're sayin', Chairley, aboot teazin'? A dinna' onderstaun' yer' Greek an' Laitin."

"A Treaty of Union," solemnly continued Garrempey, without regarding the interruption; "in other words, a contract of copartnery, by which they settled their mutual interests. It was expressly covenanted that the firm thereby constituted, was to be known to all whom it might concern, as the firm of BULL AND M'TEEVISH. Under this *nomen socii* the company carried on its business, and has prospered. M'Teevish has contributed, in proportion to his interest, as much, if not more capital than Bull, and bears, at least, a proportional share of the working expenses."

"I deny that, Gabby."

"Wheesht noo, Chairley! ye ken ye stoppit me," interposed Huistan.

"His sons," continued Garrempey, with some

emotion, "have shed their best blood fully and freely upon many a hard-fought field, and under many a burning sun, for the protection and profit of the old concern."

Here Huistan became visibly affected, and Charley was seen to wink twice. The former wiped away that convenient tear which somehow or other always found itself pumped up into the left corner of his right eye at any recital which could possibly recall reminiscences of Quatre Bras or Waterloo, for, in the former of these desperate fights, Huistan's eldest brother, "a braw, braw lad, an' a full sergeant," in the gallant 42d, or, as Huistan loved to call it, the *Freacadan Dhu*,—the Black Watch,—fell at the moment Kellerman's lancers cut off those unfortunate sections of the brave highlanders, who were not in time to form square. Charley's winks are to be accounted for partly from the effect of Garrempey's eloquence, but chiefly from an extra straining of his optics to discover whether the accustomed tear was going to make its appearance, believing, as he did, that it would turn up in Huistan's eye as certainly as the Waterloo banquet did in the time of Wellington.

"And," continued Garrempey, not unobservant of the impression which he had just made, "to a very considerable extent they have allowed the sons of

John to enjoy the congenial indulgence of sitting at home at ease."

"Hold hard, Gabby. I can't admit—"

"Is he bringin' hame tae the faimily, Chairley?"

"Peace, Hugh! Go on, Gabby. I promise I won't stop you again."

"They have done," resumed the speaker, "very much to give stability, as colonists, to the possessions of the firm in foreign parts, and, in fact, they are remarkable for being no where so much at home as when they are abroad."—

"Or in England," added Charley, mechanically, and evidently forgetful of his promise.

"But in recent times," continued Garrempey, unmindful of a thrust which would have somewhat ruffled his feathers at any other time, "John seems to take it for granted that, because he is senior partner and cashier, and encases himself in breeches somewhat wider round the abdomen than those of his partner, he can, with propriety, ignore his existence. He thinks it is more convenient, and probably more euphonious, to call the offices of the company, Bull's chambers, and the vessels, Bull's ships. Now, I don't say, Charley, that Alexander is a very elegant name, although its etymology ought to redeem it from the accusation of provincialism, and protect it from the contempt of such an enthusiastic Philhellene

a British Parliament? But anyhow, if Bull admits that he owes Sandy a ten-pound note, is he justified in refusing to pay it because Paddy may delicately hint that John has stolen his kitchen poker?"

"That's all very well, Gabby, but even supposing I were, *brevitatis causa*—excuse me for culling a phrase from your legal flower-garden—to drop the Irish"—

"Like a het potawto," exclaimed Huistan.

"No impertinence! descendant of Fingal of the tangled hair. What, I ask, is to be done with our colonies? Canada, Australia, and New Zealand would, under the Blackiean system, be all included under the collective name of Great Britain."

"I don't precisely know what you mean, Charley, by the *Blackiean* system, unless it be that peculiarly English institution, the prize-ring; but if you mean to pass off for argument what you have said about Ireland and the Colonies, I shall be reluctantly obliged to conclude that Truman and Hanbury's Entire has a slight tendency to obfuscate the logical acumen of the English intellect."

"We'll cure him wi' Ardbeg! we'll cure him wi' Ardbeg!" exclaimed Huistan.

"You are doubtless aware," resumed Garrempey, "that Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are British possessions, in the precise sense in which West India plantations may be the property of Smith and

Jones. They are held for behoof of the firm. Scotland, with regard to England, is in the position of one *qui rem aliquem cum alio possidet*, and although these Colonies are part of the property of the State, they are not the State itself, any more than the joint possession of a coffee plantation would make it the firm of Smith and Jones. I don't suppose the eminent Smith would experience any difficulty in doing the right thing, by calling his firm by its proper name, because the company owned large possessions in Jamaica. Such an *embarras des richesses* would not turn his practical head ; but if he were a funny man, like Bull, he might probably try to laugh his partner into sinking his *nomen socii*, by comic allusions to the quality of leeks, and facetious doubts as to the existence of Caractacus, and the genealogy of Cadwallader."

"Anything else, Gabby ?" asked Charley, with a peculiarity of utterance, which we have too much regard for his fair fame to try to exhibit by orthoepical signs, and with a look, which we fear betrayed the fact that he had been paying more attention to some other matter than to Garrempey's discourse. That gentleman was, however, so much absorbed in his argument, the thread of which he never for a moment lost, that he did not notice that there was any material difference of expression on his opponent's countenance from that

of its ordinary look of smart intelligence. As a matter of course his attention was not directed to Huistan, or if it had been, he would have perceived a marked difference there also. It is quite possible that had Garrempey been paying a tithe of the devotion to his liquor which he was evidently bestowing upon his pleading, he might have been as striking an illustration of the overpowering influence of Ardbeg as his two cronies ; but the fact was, that he was two tumblers behind them, for, although Huistan had religiously filled his glass each time he and Charley helped themselves, and poured it into his tumbler, Garrempey having the feeling strong upon him that he was pleading a *bona fide* legal case, relied mechanically more upon his snuff than upon his toddy. The consequence was that at this particular stage of the proceedings, he had about two glasses and a half of whisky in his tumbler, with only as much water as had served to melt the load of sugar which had been accumulated by Huistan's faithful performance of his duty.

Garrempey naturally felt somewhat nettled at the curt enquiry made by Charley, as to whether he had anything else to say, and it stopped him for a moment. It was a critical moment, for he had been gathering himself up for a great effort, a crushing peroration which would have

crowned the argument he had been so industriously rearing in support of the rights of his country. Luckily, or unluckily, as may be determined by the result, Garrempey somewhat hastily and excitedly seized his tumbler without suspecting that he had fallen into arrear, and swallowed its contents almost at a gulp. Fatal draught! It will rob him of the triumph of which he was all but certain. See! he is conscious of his error. He feels the subtle poi—aha!—the generous liquor hastening to occupy his brain! He knows his danger, and he makes a supreme effort—there is no time to be lost, for the citadel will be shortly attacked—so he gives himself a shake, like the shaggy Newfoundland, when, dripping, he arrives upon *terra firma*. He concentrates all the powers of his mind upon the accomplishment of the momentous issue. The willing brain prepares *reculer pour mieux sauter* and rapidly withdraws its outposts, already attacked, to support the centre, and guards its threatened flanks.

With a look of dogged resolve Garrempey proceeds with unfaltering voice.

“Everybody knows that new England, although one of the States, is not the United States of America any more than old England is the United Kingdom. If nationality is to be sunk by an agglomeration of races it should be sunk by all. We Scotsmen,”
_T

he exclaimed, looking as proudly around as if he were addressing an enthusiastic audience in the Music Hall of Edinburgh, “are content to sink it with England, but not without her. With her we consent to be British, but with her or without her we will *not* be English. No man loves an Englishman more than I do. I believe he furnishes as fair a test of all that is manly and honourable as it is necessary to seek for, but I am not disposed to be called the Englishman I am not, and cease to be the Scotsman I am, to humour a fashion, or avert a sneer. Above all, I am not willing to carry about with me the ugly feeling of being merely the hybrid descendant of an inferior and conquered race!”

“Bravo! Gabby—God bless you, my boy!” was all, alas! that Charley was able to articulate, and that by no means distinctly.

“Got pless us a’ three baith thegeither!” mumbled poor Huistan, while both Charley and he, by a miracle, managed to attain what the latter called their *equalbillarum*.

Garrempey got up at the same time.

The citadel had now capitulated, further defence being useless, and he, too, like his friends, was obliged to succumb to the victorious Ardbeg. The three worthies were found by Kirsty at a nameless hour in the morning—standing upright, it is true,

but in a position which looked as if they had succeeded in improvising themselves into a temporary theodolite, or had accomplished the interesting operation of piling arms. They were *Tres in uno*. The Treaty of Union was again complete. May it ever remain so!

C H A P T E R X V I.

DISASTERS OF A MORNING—ALARMING NEWS—HIGHLAND CA-
ROUSAL—NISH! NISH! NISH!

AT a rather advanced hour of the next day, Charley began to rub his eyes, and to mutter something which sounded very like *ubinam gentium sumus?*

The room in which he found himself, as well as the appurtenances thereof, were all strange and unfamiliar to him. He felt a heavy weight over the region of the stomach, which suggested horrible doubts as to the continued purity of his favourite Ardbeg. But the incubus was, if not satisfactorily, at least clearly accounted for, by a prolonged stertorous sound, which Charley at once recognised as proceeding from the trumpet of his friend, Huistan, a fact which also led, upon the orthodox principle of philosophic induction, to the other discovery, that the head of the snoring descendant of Fingal was lying upon his (Charley's) chest. Further investigation showed that Garrempey's trunk was the cause of his experiencing a sensation, which might not unnaturally be expected to result from the cross-trees of a

hermaphrodite brig being laid across one's legs. The truth was, that Kirsty had been obliged to cause her guests to experience the delightful sensation of sleeping "three in a bed"—one, too, with regard to the manufacture of which, she, prudent woman as she was, had, when ordering it from the village joiner; previous to her marriage, given the same explicit instructions which she invariably delivered to the family tailor, when making any article of clothing for her boys—to wit—"tae mak' it for their growth." In spite, however, of a faithful compliance with that injunction, by the aforesaid joiner, and the fact that the nuptial couch, like some fashionable coaches, was capable of satisfying *in omnibus*, the ordinary wants of Kirsty's establishment, even if the members thereof had all attained their full growth, it failed to satisfy the demands made upon it on the present occasion, in respect of a growth which had not entered into the calculations of the worthy joiner—that of the bulky landlord of the "inns" of Porterbier. Thus it happened that, in course of the night, that inconveniently prolonged individual, finding that some unaccustomed and inscrutable barrier always interposed itself to the longitudinal extension of his troublesome continuations, found ways and means, as only men who are in a state of semi somnolency semi ——, will somehow find,

to get his legs out of the bed altogether, right across the whole breadth of the room. He settled them upon the top of a table by the side of the wall, part of which article of furniture had been previously colonized by an extensive assortment of glass and earthenware, while he succeeded in placing almost midway, below that particular part of his body, where, to use a French euphemism, *le dos perd son nom*, a pretty stout basin-stand, and also arranged that his head should rest comfortably upon Charley's chest. His legs were lost in the vista beyond, thus forming a bridge in point of size, hardly inferior to the Bridge of Sighs of beautiful Venice, the difference being, that the one was supported in the middle by a pier, while the other is not. Alas! every bridge like every Doge, tut!—every dog—has its day; but Huistan's, like its master, was destined only to have its "morning." Kirsty had judiciously closed all the window-shutters of the room, intending that her guests should have a sufficiently long snooze to enable them to sleep off the effects of the previous night's debauch. The room was consequently dark as Erebus. Unfortunately, instead of going herself to rouse the drowsy sleepers, she intrusted that delicate duty to the artist who had succeeded so well in achieving her sign-board, but as no one of mortals is wise at all hours, it would be unreasonable to expect that any one of them should be always

successful. Not that the genius of the sign-board might not have acquitted himself creditably in the delicate operation which an inscrutable Providence had apparently determined he should now attempt to fulfil, if he had only displayed a grain of the remarkable prevision which he had shown in dealing with the stout gentleman depicted on the sign. He expected nothing, however, from the long gentleman within, whom he only knew as a pronounced niggard in his dealings with the race of volunteer horse holders, and whom he regarded, moreover, as the cause of his being deprived of his legitimate corner of the family couch, so he did not stand upon any ceremony as to the mode or order of his going into the *penetralia* sacred to the slumbers of his mother's household. Pushing the door open, and flying within, somewhat in the same style as he generally rushed out to seize the reins of a dismounting cavalier, he rudely and unartistically unhorsed the hapless Huistan by rushing with the *élan* of a mountain deer against the extemporized pontoon which he had chosen to make of his body, and in a twinkling converted it into a flying bridge. It fell, as a matter of course, and great was the fall thereof; and, melancholy to relate, the legs swept away, like a whirlwind, the whole superstructure of glass and crockery along with them in their mad

career to *terra firma*, exemplifying, but in rather a boisterous manner, that important physical law which the great Newton was content should be demonstrated by the simple dropping of an apple. The *débris* formed such a melancholy holocaust round Huistan's feet, that the sight moved Charley—not to tears, but to a serious communing with his own thoughts, and to the perpetration of the following extempore lines, which he inscribed, by the special permission of Kirsty, on the fly leaf of her family Bible, below the names of two of her children who had died long before of small-pox, *in Memoriam* of both events, and as a *solatium* to Kirsty's wounded feelings, which four times the value of the crockery duly paid into her horny fist did not seem adequate to assuage :—

They lay in beauty side by side,
Like joys too frail to last ;
Or wrecks left by the ebbing tide,
As memories of the past.

Charley thought his lines quite equal to any of those composed by the Laureate when he stood in the wet upon a certain tower of bad eminence. Charley's idea was that it was a case of "heavy wet."

The noise, as Garrempey often declared afterwards, was precisely similar to that made by the great master spirit of evil, in his descent down the chimney of that

unhallowed lodge, where he (Garrempey) first saw the light as a free and accepted mason.

Huistan, thus summarily knocked up—or rather knocked down, was not long in getting into his nether integuments, that is to say, in point of time, for his fall, although it had made him somewhat short in the temper, had not interfered with his length in any other way, unless it had some connection with a rather long conference which he held with his faithful satellite, Donald Frisheal, who, having felt seriously alarmed for the safety of the party, had come to look after them. Huistan returned to the bedroom to find Charley and Garrempey endeavouring, under more than ordinary difficulties, to wash in the same basin, and to dry their faces at one and the same time, with one and the same towel.

"Did you'll hear o' the gran' tea party at the manse last nicht, Mr Garrempey?" asked Huistan, after breakfast, and as the trio were preparing to trudge back to Porterbier. "They've been a' there except the three ministers wha dissented. Mrs Pry, the post-mistress, telt Donald a' aboot it, for she was inveeted, as she's an aunt o' Sneaker's. They're a' delighted wi' the wey things went aff yesterday."

"I can't say as much for our work last night," said Charley, rather ruefully. "I fear Ardbeg's beginning to play me false."

"Not a bit of it, Charley," observed Garrempey. "It's the weight of Huistan's head on your stomach, that's given you a headache."

"I believe you're right, Gabby; we'd better pull another hair out of the old dog. Kirsty, bring in the whuskey."

That discussed, the trio set off with their faces towards Porterbier.

"Mrs Fillyerglass," resumed Huistan, "is—"

"Hang Mrs Fillyerglass, Hugh, but give me a match first," said Charley, getting into a better mood.

"Ou ay, but they say she's in a dreedfu' wey," continued Huistan, handing Charley a fusee. She's never yet heerd frae her man wha gaed tae Snuffmull alang wi' that blackguard Eerishman, an' her freens there dinna ken ocht aboot him. It's noo twa or maist three weeks sin they gaed awa, an' Jess M'Gregor's been sayin' that Casey an' him never ca'd on ony o' the pairties wi' the letters they tuk wi' them, for she heerd Mr Porter sayin' that Mr Puncheon had wrote tae Snuffmull.

"In fac'," continued Huistan, with a serious face, "they're reported tae hae been murdered an drooned in Lochspelding."

"I know you can both keep a secret," said Garrempey. "Donald brought me a letter this morn-

ing from Mr John M'Service, sheriff-officer, Ochtertory, to whom I had written to look after them.

"Here it is," and he read a full account of what we have before related.

It would have done one's heart good to see how Charley and Huistan enjoyed the recital.

"But what on earth can have become of them?" asked Garrempey. "I hope none of those wild fellows in the steamer would have thrown them overboard in the dark, like cattle in a storm. They could easily have been back long before this."

"Got! it looks verra strange," said Huistan again, rather seriously. "A ken the Snuffmull men brawly, an' if Casey an' Alister quarrelled wi' them, a wudna go boond for what they micht dae."

"By George!" said Garrempey, "I hope M'Service has destroyed my letter—we may be charged with having been accessory to a murder, or with *plagii crimen*."

"Plaguin the Crinan!" said Huistan. "They didna' gang by the Crinan at a'."

"Tuts!" said Garrempey, not in the best of humour, "I was speaking of abduction."

"Abdoocion! What's that in a' the warl'd?"

"It's a ducking in Lochspelding, Huistan," said Charley, enjoying the rueful faces of his two companions.

"Ou ay, faith ! a wudna wunner but they've jist got it. But we had naething tae dae wi't—ye didna' pit ma name in yer letter, Mr Garrempey, a houp ? It wadna' be like your uisual discretion tao get me intil a scrape."

"No, no, Mr M'Huistan, I have compromised nobody, I hope," said Garrempey, musingly, but evidently not at all satisfied with himself. "I have a correspondent at Portslush to whom I think I'll write on the subject."

"Don't do it, Gabby — leave it alone," said Charley. "Depend upon it, the fellows will turn up. The devil has some more work on hand for them here. He doesn't want to recall such useful ambassadors in a hurry. 'Nickey's bairns,' as you call them, remain longer upon earth, as a rule, than better behaved ones."

"Whan are ye gaun back tae Embro', Mr Garrempey ?" said IIuistan, as they came in sight of the "Inns."

"Well, I intend to go by the steamer to-night."

"I'll go with you, Gabby," said Charley. "My time's about up, and I'll have your company."

"All right. I have written to retain Mr Parsons Dodge, Advocate, to represent us in the Assembly, and shall write to you, Mr M'Huistan, what he advises we shoud do when I see him. He stands well

with the Assembly, and it would be better that we should be guided from the first by his advice. In the meantime you and Donald, and such other parties as you can depend on, should try to get as many good witnesses as possible. They must be able to stand a cross-examination, to remember the texts and Psalms, and to give a reason for the faith that's in them. Of course the Objectors' evidence comes first. If you can find out who they propose to examine, so much the better."

"Ou a'll maun that a think," said Huistan.

"Well, then," said Garrempey, "I'll be here two or three days before the meeting, and we'll go fully over the whole matter."

"Hallo! Gabby, there's your friend, Poind, turning the corner of Huistan's establishment," said Charley. "I'll bet a crown he's been precognoscing Ishpal in your absence, Hugh!"

"Nae fear o' that, Chairley; she wad hae naething tae dae wi' ony but a college bred lawyer, like oor freen, Mr Garrempey, there."

"Oh, but Mr M'Huistan," observed that gentleman, "Mr Poind would tell her, no doubt, that he had been at the College of Actuaries, and that he holds the degree of C.A. in consequence, as well as that of N.P."

"An' what's N.P., Mr Garrempey?"

"Why, that," observed Charley, "is a degree which you received long ago."

"Me, Chairley? Ye ken weel enuch, a was ne'er at a College in a' ma life, beenna' lookin' ance at the Glasgae College, in the High Street."

"Whether or not, Hugh, you're just as well entitled to the degree of N.P., as Mr Poind is to that of C.A., for N.P. signifies Notorious Publican, and I've no doubt, you're a much better publican than he's either an Actuary or—

"A Lawyer," observed Huistan, laughing; "he's nae lawyer ava', jist a pettifogger, but thae sort seem tae thrive in this kintra a heep better than honester an' cleverer men."

"Yes, Hugh, that's because you Scotchmen very often prefer to go to a low practitioner, just as you prefer to sneak into the back doors of low dram shops instead of going in by the front entrance of a respectable hotel, like your own for instance, as we're now doing."

On entering, Garrempey and Charley were warmly shaken by the hands by a crowd of enthusiastic partisans, who were carousing in the large room. Church cases, lykewakes, and funerals, seemed equally with more appropriate occasions for rejoicing, to afford an excuse for drinking in the Parish of Veto.

Garrempey was obliged to take the arm-chair at

the head of the long fir table, which was surrounded by about fifty excited parishioners, while the presentee and Charley were seated on his right. An imposing looking piper walked up and down the room, with the air, as Charley remarked, of a majestic turkey, blowing out his cheeks with an expression alarmingly suggestive of impending apoplexy, in a frenetic attempt to produce a paean of anticipated victory, or screaming out a defiant pibroch, composed of a succession of yells in comparison with which the war whoop of a Commanche Indian is music itself. The bards of the village had likewise their share in the demonstration. One gave an extempore song in Gaelic in praise of Garrempey. Another had composed an ode in English, intended to be a satire upon the Presbytery, which if deficient in elegance was not wanting in abuse. The Gaelic *aria* had a chorus about a yard long, during the singing of which, the company joined hands, which they swung backwards and forwards, much in the style of a tribe of monkeys when they swing themselves over a stream with their tails joined. At certain parts of the music they dashed their fists frantically upon the table with an utter disregard of the consequences to their knuckles. Charley happened to have his hand grasped enthusiastically by a brawny highlander, with a fist worthy of Hercules. For a time, by dint of carefully watch-

ing the descent of the locked digits, he managed it so that the giant's should strike the table, which they did every now and then, with a thud that caused a shudder to pass through Charley's frame. Under the unmerciful thumps of these noisy revellers the bacchanalian board, covered as it was with bottles, glasses, and gill stoups, pipes, and other miscellaneous articles, emitted sounds, such as might be produced by half a dozen distracted kettle drums and slightly fractured triangles. Unfortunately for himself, Charley happened to turn his head for a moment to answer a question, and failing to "mark time," the wrong twist was given in the descent, and poor Charley exclaimed with tears of agony filling his eyes—"Oh Lord! my hand's smashed to pieces." The chorus was just finished, but upon its recurrence he ruefully declined to intrust his hand again to the tender mercies of his neighbour, who thumped on his own account, apparently with as little feeling of pain as if he were merely beating a pillow. Afterwards both his and Garrempey's healths were proposed and drank with highland honours, when the whole company leaped upon the chairs, each man placing one foot upon a chair and the other upon the table, holding a glass of whisky in the right hand, and roaring out lustily, *Nish! nish! nish!* forming a tableau which reminded one

of a Corroborry of natives on the banks of some Australian river.

This ceremony, followed by "Auld Lang Syne," sung in the same position, terminated the proceedings, and Garrempey, and Charley, who resolved to accompany him to Edinburgh, were suffered to get quietly on board the steamer, having resolutely declined to be escorted by the company, headed by the aforesaid piper.

What confessions Charley made to his friend, Garrempey, and what precise functions he performed in connection with the London Press, we are not at liberty to tell, as they were made with all the secrecy of the confessional, whatever the value of that may be, seeing that Charley's confessions were always made after the fifth tumbler; but Garrempey was enjoined to tell it not in Gath, to publish it not in Askalon, for the Philistines, as a matter of course, would be sure to be upon him. It is highly probable, however, that we shall see Charley whenever another general election comes round, when, in all likelihood, he will contest the suffrages of Dinnquaighshire. Should he do so, and give us permission to enter into further particulars, we shall perhaps be able to tell all about that mysterious individual, MR CHARLES EDWARD PUFF.

CHAPTER XVII.

EVENING PARTY AT THE MANSE—SPECULATIONS OF MRS PRY—
VILLAGE GOSSIP—A LAWYER'S DECLARATION OF LOVE—THE
REV. HAVRAL CLASH SINGS A COMIC SONG.

WHILE Garrempey, Charley, and Huistan, had been making a night of it at Kirsty's, the party at Mrs M'Corkscrew's were enjoying what in newspaper literature is styled, "the cup which cheers, but does not inebriate," and were "tripping it on the light fantastic toe." There was a pretty fair gathering of friends and well-wishers, including, of course, the indispensable Poind, the inevitable Sneaker, and the gossiping Mrs Pry. Mrs M'Corkscrew began to entertain hopes that she would be allowed to remain in the manse, from the apparently favourable result of the day's proceedings. Miss Flora regarded Sneaker as already her own, while that gentleman looked round the room with the air of one saying to himself—"I wonder how much it will cost to furnish the manse?" Poind saw additional attractions in the possessor of fifteen thousand pounds, while the young lady herself was anxiously regarding Mr Porter, and wondering when he would ask her to dance.

Mrs Pry had been intently watching the movements of her nephew, and of her whom she called his "intendit."

"Keep me ! Mrs M'Corkscrew," she suddenly exclaimed, without taking her eyes off the interesting pair, "what an impudent cratur that man they ca' Garrempey is ! Set him up tae speak as he did o' the likes o' you gentle folks here ! A was maist fleein' on him mysel'."

"Oh ! these lawyers," piously ejaculated the other, "they devour widows' houses."

"Yet, we canna' dae weel wantin' them aithers," replied the postmistress, turning her head, but casting at the same time a sly glance with what she was in the habit of calling the "tail o' her ee" in the direction of the lovers, who were engaged in earnest conversation on the sofa.

"They're just a necessary evil," dolefully observed the other. "Take another cup. Where do you get your tea from, Mrs Pry ? I hear a great deal about it. Flora tells me it's capital."

"Ou, I jist get the steward o' the Rob Roy to gie a ca' in at Campbell Blair's, on his wey tae the Broomielaw, ye ken. It's in Jamaica Street, an' a rale fine establishtment it is, whar ye're shure o' gettin' every thing guid. Ye'll get the verra best tea for three shillings an' four pence the pun'."

"Well, I'll be very much obliged to you, if you'll procure me a pound of it."

"A'll dae that wi' pleasure, Mrs M'Corkscrew. A'll gar Willie Machash bring't wi' him the next time a see him. He's up reglar at the post whan the boat comes in. But isna that an awfu' thing noo, aboot Alister Fillyerglass an' the man they ca' Casey? They tell me their throats hae been cut frae ear to ear, an' their bodies thrawn intil a loch they ca' Speldrun, wi' a rape roun' their necks, tied tae twa big stanes!"

"Dear me! Mrs Pry. Do you think that can be true?"

"There's nae doot o't, Mrs Fillyerglass believes't hersel'; an' d'ye ken," she remarked, in a whisper, "a dinna think she wud grieve lang aboot it. Alister was gettin' sic a drucken uiseless fallow, he drank the maist o' the profits she was makin' oot o' the shop, an' ye ken," she added slyly, "he's a heep aulder than her. She's a rale weel-dain' wuman, an' a braw ane tae, an' wudna' be lang o' gettin' anither man if Alister was awa'. She tel't me she didna' care hoo sune it happen't."

"Do you say so?"

"I dae that, but ye mauna say a word aboot it, ye ken. Hoo weel that pair on the soffy looks! Aweel, it jist pits me in mind o' my young days, Mrs M'Corkscrew."

The minister's widow put up her handkerchief to her face and heaved a sigh, thinking, probably, of her own youthful days, but she immediately remarked,

"He's a good-looking young man, Mr Sneaker."

"Ay, an' as guid's he's bonny," briskly remarked his loving aunt. "He's ane o' the kindest an' on-selfishest craturs I ever kent. He was that frae his craidle."

The loving pair referred to were seated by themselves.

"I have not had an opportunity of telling you, my dear Flora," said Sneaker, "that I called upon your aunt at Crossmungo. She's a much younger woman than you led me to expect," he continued, with an involuntary look of chagrin and disappointment, which his fair companion did not observe,—"and good-looking. She told me her husband died only five years ago. She's quite well and healthy now, and received me very kindly. She asked me to call any time I had a mind. She has a capital house and grounds, and must be wealthy."

"I believe her husband left her a hundred thousand pounds, besides the house and grounds, and two other estates."

"Do you really tell me so!" said Sneaker, a sudden thought seeming to flash across his mind.

"I cannot say positively, but I have been told so, and I have no reason to doubt it."

Sneaker gave a sigh, which did not fail to reach the ears of his companion, but she, poor girl, thought it related to herself, and gave his hand an additional squeeze. It was not returned with equal vigour.

At this moment Mrs M'Corkscrew came forward and said—"Flora, I think you'll have to look after supper. Mr Sneaker will excuse you for half-an-hour."

"Oh! by all means." He had been longing for a talk with Poind, to see whether he had ascertained anything about the aunt's deed of settlement. So, beckoning to the latter, who was holding an animated conversation with Miss M'Phillabeg, he came over to the sofa.

"Well, Mr Poind," said Sneaker, blandly, "have you found out anything as to the deed? I was just speaking to Miss M'Corkscrew about it, and she left to give me a chance of having a talk with you."

"Oh! yes; I was thinking how I could get hold of you for a few minutes. I have not been to Glasgow myself, but I wrote to my partner, Mr Horn, and had a letter from him this morning. — 'ad no time to show it to you before, but here it is. ye ken...ead it."

Aweel, [“]ill think it's connected with the case," he M'Corks

observed, as he saw Sneaker giving an uneasy look around.

The letter ran as follows :—

CHAMBERS,
22 CANDLERIGGS,
GLASGOW, —————— 18 ——————

“MY DEAR POIND,

“I got your letter of Tuesday, as to the information wished by your fair friend

“I saw Rule in Court yesterday, but as I could not put the question to him direct, I was obliged to adopt the ruse of saying that one of our clients was thinking of feuing a piece of ground out at Crossmungo, the proprietor of which, I understood, was the party you refer to.

“I made several enquiries as to the feu duty, composition, the state of the title, &c. In the course of conversation, I ascertained that the aunt is absolute fiar, her husband having left her everything. She has no children. The Inventory of the personal estate is £150,000, and the rental, feu duties, and interest of money invested, amount to £2000 per annum. She has executed a general Disposition and Settlement, not a Trust Disposition, as you mentioned, with, of course, the usual power to alter.

“The lady you refer to, is entitled, on her aunt’s death, to the life-rent interest of a sum of £5000, to be administered by trustees, the fee to go to the children of any marriage she may contract. Of course, in these circumstances, the husband cannot touch the principal.

“Business is pretty brisk. I hope you are getting on swimmingly with the Veto case.

“Yours always,

“BLOWYER HORN.

“SHARPER POIND, Esq.”

"Is it satisfactory?" asked Poind, who saw by Sneaker's look that he was disappointed.

"Well, I think Miss M'Corkscrew expected that it would be different. The letter says that the aunt has power to alter."

"Yes, that's a usual reservation in all Dispositions and Settlements."

"Then, supposing," said Sneaker, hesitatingly, "one were to marry the niece, she might not, after all, get this life-rent?"

"Possibly; but I don't think it's a likely thing that a wealthy old woman like this aunt would alter it."

"But she's not old; and what's more, she's good looking."

"Well, what about that?"

"Only this," said the other, "that she might marry again."

"True, and you think that perhaps her husband might get her to make a new disposition of her property. Well, that would be upon the cards certainly, but of course all depends upon the character of the lady herself. If she married again, she would, no doubt, enter into a marriage contract, repeating the provision."

"But she might not, and her husband might become unfortunate in business."



"Well, but if there was no other deed executed, the present would stand. I'm afraid, Mr Sneaker, you're—I mean Miss M'Corkscrew is—rather anxious on the subject."

Seeing Sneaker's face getting rather red, the lawyer suddenly changed the subject.

"By the bye, have you done anything for me with Miss M'Phillabeg?"

"I—I—that is, I didn't speak to her myself, but I think Miss M'Corkscrew did."

"You spoke to her then?"

"I only hinted it slightly at first to pave the way."

The fact was, Sneaker had been so much engrossed with his own selfish plans that he forgot all about those of his coadjutor, and rather than confess the truth, had recourse to equivocation, which did not escape the observation of Poind. The latter, however, merely said, "I hope you can bring it above board to-night, as I shall have to leave for Glasgow to-morrow."

"Have you sounded her yourself?" asked the other.

"Well, hardly so far as to be able to say how she feels. When I first came I thought she wouldn't be averse to my addresses, but I'm not so sure about it now. Do you observe that she seems to flirt a good deal with that fellow, Porter? I wonder how she could think of a fat, bloated Englishman like him."

Poind's jealousy had made him malicious—Porter, though he might be called stout, was neither bloated nor fat, but what is ordinarily termed jolly looking.

"There's no accounting for tastes," observed Sneaker; "but here comes Miss M'Corkscrew—I'll speak to her at once."

"Do, like a good fellow," said Poind, rising to rejoin Miss M'Phillabeg, whom he saw sitting by herself, Porter having left her to join the clerical party in the dining room, who, as they were not dancing men, passed the time in guzzling strong toddy until the cloth was laid for supper, the savoury odour of which, proceeding from the kitchen close by, began by this time to quicken their sense of hunger. Toddy, it seems, is regarded as a strong provocative to appetite.

As the combined aroma of roast fowls, frizzled ham, and other nice things, became stronger, and the sound of sputtering frying pans waxed louder, several impatient heads were turned in the direction of the door to see if they could, like sister Ann in Blue Beard, observe "anybody coming." Mr Havral Clash could not resist exclaiming, "I wunner hoo lang thae folk in the ither room are to keep shuffling awa' wi' their feet?"

But there was more than shuffling with the feet going on there. Sneaker was shuffling with regard to Miss M'Corkscrew, while Poind, having Miss

M'Phillabeg all to himself, was trying to shuffle his cards to win a stake of fifteen thousand pounds.

"Well, Miss M'Phillabeg," he observed, "I see your friend has left you to join the clericals."

"And why don't you follow him?"

"Because," said he, in his blandest manner, "I prefer your society."

"Oh! come now," exclaimed the wicked Miss Helen, with a roguish look, "that's downright flattery, Mr Poind. If you prefer my society, let us become *vis-à-vis* to Flora and Mr Stirk, I see they're looking for a couple."

Poind was delighted. Could it be his own declaration, which he regarded as a palpable hit, that had produced so favourable an impression, or was it that Sneaker had fulfilled his promise to speak to Miss M'Corkscrew? He was in doubt. Anyhow the result was the same, and Poind set to his partner, and pousetted, with increased agility, and immense satisfaction to himself. On seeing the lady to her seat he placed himself beside her, resolved to renew the attack.

"Now, do you really think, Miss M'Phillabeg," he resumed, while trying to look as enchanting as his skinny jaws would permit, "that I don't prefer your company to that of those carousing gentlemen in the other room? More than that," he said, looking un-

utterably tender things, "I prize your society more than that of any lady here. I have seen no one since I came to this place for whom I have a higher esteem or regard than for yourself. I might even use a stronger term," he said, with increased warmth.

"That's what all you gentlemen say," replied his fair companion, with an admirable look of embarrassment. "If we could believe your sincerity it would be all very well, but you say things as a mere matter of course, and laugh at us for believing them."

"Upon my honour! Miss M'Phillabeg," exclaimed Poind with emphasis, putting his hand at the same time on his breast, "I am perfectly sincere. It may be foolish, perhaps, on my part to say it, but it comes from my heart. I have been thinking of you ever since I came here. I wonder sometimes how I have got so far through with this law business. In fact, I feel it becoming irksome already."

"We must not talk any more of this nonsense, Mr Poind. I see people are looking at us."

"Well, then, may I write, as I leave to-morrow?"

"You must use your own discretion upon that point," replied the lady, rising, and going over to rejoin her cousin.

"Losh me!" said Mrs Pry, who had been regarding the two with the watchfulness of a cat during

the period occupied by the conversation, “if that’s no coortship, it’s unco like it.”

“What’s that?” said Mrs M‘Corkscrew.

“That couple ower there—Mr Poind and Miss M‘Phillabeg, a doot they’re makin’t up.”

“Oh, no! she’s only flirting with him. He’s not the sort of man she would take up with, you may depend upon it.”

“A’m no verra shure aboot that, Mrs M‘Corkscrew; he seemed tae me tae be pleeding his cause gey weel. Ye ken we’re a’ open tae flattery—wuman’s weak.”

“Yes, and men are deceitful,” replied the other.

“Weel, I’ll no say no; but, losh me! we a’ like tae be made o’ by them for a’ that. We wudna be what we’re noo if we wasna.”

By this time supper was announced. Poind was going up to offer his arm to Miss M‘Phillabeg. Porter was advancing on the opposite side. Both arrived at the same time. The ungrateful creature took the arm of him who had left her society for that of a few toddy drinkers in preference to that of the gallant knight who had declared his love for her! Such, however, is a flirt. Like an *ignis fatuus*, the more she’s followed the more she recedes, until she, perhaps, lands her pursuer in the ditch. As Shakespeare hath it—

"Love like a shadow flies, when substance love pursues,
Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues."

Or as Buchanan elegantly paints her in the famous lines, which, it is said, Ménage admired so much, as to have preferred their authorship to his best benefice.

"Illa mihi semper praesenti dura Neaera,
Me quoties absum semper abesse dolet;
Non desiderio nostri, non mæret amore,
Sed se non nostro posse dolore frui."

"Neaera is harsh at our every greeting,
Whene'er I am absent she wants me again;
'Tis not that she loves me, or cares for our meeting,
She misses the pleasure of seeing my pain."

Poind looked crest-fallen, but did not despair. A kcen lawyer never does.

The conversation at supper was chiefly occupied with the events of the day, and the mysterious absence of the two parties who had gone to Snuffmull.

"How is it that Dr Browser was so hard upon Mr Mackintrowsers, to-day?" asked Poind.

Mackintrowsers, it may be mentioned, was not of the party.

"Oh!" said the Rev. Havral Clash, "I thocht ye kent. He would be hard on us a' if he could. He affects to believe that none o' us here present, or

Mackintrowsers either, would ever have gotten pairishes except for the Disruption ; and when Mackintrowsers was inducted, the doctor wrote a song about him, which annoyed him very much. His faither was a joiner. It spread over the country, and used to be sung often at pairties. They have never been on good terms since. You would see that he wasna angry wi' the banter o' Dr Totty M'Killrussell."

"Yes, I observed that," said Poind.

"Mr Clash can sing the song," said Skirleywhitter, with a malicious grin.

"Oh ! pray do sing it, Mr Clash," said Miss M'Phillabeg.

Havral had the vanity to believe that he could sing, but at first, like all great *artistes*, he pleaded the usual excuses. Pressed, however, by a bevy of fair importuners, he consented, and favoured the company with the following ditty :—

"THE WANDERING PREACHER."

As sung by the Rev. Lauchlin Mackintrowsers, at a Presby-
tery dinner, on his induction to the parish of Loch-
abernomore.

Words by the Rev. Dr Pompeius Browser.—AIR, Joseph Tuck.

I'M Jock the joiner's only son,
A raither curious lad, sirs,
An' for some five an' twenty years,
A waundering life I've had, sirs ;

But as I've now been *settled* here,
 I'll tell you what my trade is,
 I'm joiner, smith, a reverend clerk,
 An' a great freen o' the ladies.

Bow, wow, wow,
 Fal al di riddle addy,
 Bow, wow, wow.

I got ma trade in Scartintoon,
 A raither anchient place, sirs ;
 An' for the space o' twenty years,
 I seldom washed ma face, sirs.
 But whan I learn't tae read an' write,
 An' count the rule o' three, sirs ;
 Ma mither said she dreamt ae nicht,
 A clergy I sud be, sirs.

Bow, wow, wow,
 Fal al di riddle addy,
 Bow, wow, wow.

She sent me tae the pairish schule,
 Then teached by Johnny Meek, sirs ;
 'Twas there I learnt the algebra,
 The Laitin and the Greek, sirs.
 An' as I prov'd a scholard bright,
 That man o' pooerfu' knowledge,
 Advised ma dad 'twas just an' richt,
 I sud be sent tae college.

Bow, wow, wow,
 Fal al di riddle addy,
 Bow, wow, wow.

Sae I went up tae Glaisgae straucht,
 In braw new kilt an' hose, sirs,
 An' gaed tae the professor's hoose,
 Quite prood aboot ma clothes, sirs.

He took me for a piper loon,
 An' quickly shut the door, sirs ;
 An' sae I wauner'd through the toon,
 Wi' waefu' heart an' sore, sirs.

Bow, wow, wow,
 Fal al di riddle addy,
 Bow, wow, wow.

But syne I ca'd on Sandy Shaw,
 A taillyer guid an' bold, sirs,
 A hail full kizzen o' my ain,
 'To him ma tale I told, sirs.
 Says he, " Ye'll need a pair o' brecks,
 I'll see and mak them ready ;
 Gin college meets in twa three weeks,
 Ye'll hae them shure an' steady."

Bow, wow, wow,
 Fal al di riddle addy,
 Bow, wow, wow.

I got through a' the claisses fair,
 An' sync gaed tae the Ha', sirs ;
 'Twas said amang the students there,
 That I could beat them a', sirs.
 An' in the year o' forty-three,
 That year o' noise an' ruckshun,

I got a kirk frae Government,
Hooray ! for the Disruption.

Bow, wow, wow,
Fal al di riddle addy,
Bow, wow, wow.

Sin' I got a' ma learnin' by,
A score o' years, au' mair, sirs;
I've focht a battle wi' the warld,
A weary ane an' sair, sirs.
But noo I've got a kirk an' manse,
A wife an' bairnies three, sirs ;
An' meat an' drink for ony freen ;
Here's luck tae you an' me, sirs.

Bow, wow, wow,
Fal al di riddle addy,
Bow, wow, wow.

The Rev. Hlavral was highly complimented upon his song, which was received with roars of laughter.

" You might give us the one the doctor composed on yoursel' now," said the malicious Skirleywhitter, who was the cynic of the Presbytery.

Havral got rather red in the face, and said he forgot it.

" But I haven't !" growled Skirleywhitter.

" Oh, it would be too bad to ask a man to become his own executioner," said the amiable Flora—" We can't allow you, Mr Skirleywhitter."

"Very well," sulkily replied the clerical Diogenes, "the one's just as good's the other."

The feeling between the two worthies was not a very warm one, as may be inferred from this circumstance.

"Can you account, Mr Puncheon," said Poind, "for the long absence of our messengers at Snuff-mull?"

"No," answered the latter. "I wrote to the parties to whom I had given your clerk introductions, and I have had answers from them all, saying that they had neither seen nor heard anything about them."

"They tell me," said the talkative Mrs Pry, "that they're murdered, wi' their throats cut frae ear tae ear, an' thrawn into a place ca'd Loch Speldrum, wi' stanes aboot their necks."

"Who in the name of God told you that?" said Poind, horrified, for no one in the company had heard the story except Mrs M'Corkscrew, who had thought nothing about it, as her head was occupied with matters of more importance to herself.

"Ou, it was jist Mrs Fillyerglass—she tel't me hersel' that word cam' wi' the steamer tae that effec'."

"Lord preserve us!" said Skirleywhitter, "I wouldn't be surprised though it's true. I know the place well. The people are the most heathenish race in

the country, and if they knew what they came about, I would expect nothing but violence at their hands."

"This is awful," said Puncheon, "I must write at once to Ochtertory, and let the fiscal know."

"If the bodies are found, the matter will be in his hands already," remarked Poind.

"But then he may not know where they came from," observed Puncheon.

"I'll go and write a letter to him directly," said Poind, rising and leaving the room.

This disagreeable subject threw a damp over the hilarity of the evening, and shortly afterwards the party broke up.

There were two unhappy individuals in the manse that night—Messrs Sneaker and Poind. Neither of them could sleep. Harassing doubts haunted the minds of both. The former began to ponder over the possibility of an alteration of the aunt's settlement, and the chances of the objectors being unsuccessful in keeping out the presentee; but even if they were not, was it certain that he himself would be the coming man? Ah ha! think of that! The mind loveth not to dwell upon uncertainty,—it has a sickening effect. It was not a difficult jump from the niece to the aunt. There was the tremendous sum of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and two thousand pounds per annum!—the large house and

grounds dead certain. She was absolute mistress of them all—not old either, but buxom! Gad! it was something to stir a man's ambition.

Sneaker had heard that in matrimony, as in every thing else, one should never point low. To hit the mark it is often necessary to aim above it. Miss M'Corkscrew was above his mark in position and influence. Mightn't one aim even higher? Faint heart never won fair lady. He had not a faint heart, although a very selfish one, so he resolved to have two strings to his bow, and without a quiver at his dastardly resolution, he dozed off into an uneasy slumber.

Poind, who slept in the adjoining room, was equally unhappy, perhaps more so, for Sneaker was in a favourable position compared with him, being the accepted lover of Miss M'Corkscrew, whereas Poind had not been accepted, and he had strong misgivings as to whether he would be. Had he been asked his opinion, the case being that of another, he would have said, "certainly not." We are always bad judges in matters which concern ourselves, and remarkably weak counsellors where our own self-love is an opponent. A man should not, if possible, be his own lawyer any more than his own doctor, and although it is good for us to take counsel with ourselves, there are many of us, doubtless, who

would have been vastly more happy if we had advised rather more frequently with others. The decision which Poind would have had no difficulty in giving in the case of another, he could not pronounce against himself. Miss M'Phillabeg had certainly not given him permission to write, but then she hadn't refused it. She left it to his own discretion. That might, however, mean that seeing the position which Porter occupied in her estimation, it would be wiser for Poind to go no further.

While dozing uneasily in vain attempts to secure sleep, visions of £15,000, in large figures, similar to those written on the labels exhibited in the windows of drapers' shops, passed before him like dissolving views. His mind wandered again to Sneaker, and to Miss M'Corkscrew's £5000,—suddenly he saw passing slowly along the Trongate, borne on the shoulders of a well-known bearer, a huge placard with £150,000, and £2,000 per annum, written below the portrait of a widow, good-looking, and not old! He awoke with a start and began to ponder. What his thoughts were we may probably learn by and bye, meantime we shall leave the precious pair to their uneasy slumbers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MURDER WILL OUT—APPREHENSION AND EXAMINATION OF A HIGHLAND SHERIFF-OFFICER AND HIS CONCURRENT—DRAGGING FOR THE BODIES—SCENE ON LOCHSPELDING—HOW THEY MANAGE JUDICIAL INVESTIGATIONS IN IRELAND—FATE OF ALISTER FILLYERGLASS AND TIMOTHY CASEY.

POIND'S letter, the continued absence of Casey and Fillyerglass, and the rumours of their murder, at once caused the fiscal of Snuffmull to make an investigation. The story of the murder had originated with one of the hands of the steamer, who had stated in joke, that the two men had got their throats cut, and that their bodies were thrown into the loch. Curiously enough, this man had disappeared. He left the steamer in Greenock, and shipped in a vessel for America. His real name was Donald Campbell, but he signed articles as John Cameron. This, in the eyes of the fiscal, looked a very suspicious circumstance. • He was, however, at a loss where to begin his enquiry. Nobody in Ochtertory, so far as he could learn, ever saw the men. He was completely nonplussed.

Jock M'Service became seriously alarmed. He

very prudently destroyed Garrempey's letter, and held an earnest consultation with his assistant, Archy M'Taggart.

"Got! Airchy," he observed, to his fiery-haired concurrent, "put this is turnin' oot a serious bizziness; a wish a had naething tae dae wi'!"

"A wish sae tae!" said Archy, with a hang-dog look, thinking that his fees and perquisites at rousps and sales ran a fair chance of being completely smashed up.

"We maun keep verra quaite aboot it, Airchy. A houp Lucky Mackerel 'll haud her wheesht."

"Ou, she was jist as muckle tae blame as huz," said Archy, with an expression which seemed to imply satisfaction that another was in the same scrape.

"Man, a think ye'll hae tae gang ower the nicht, an' wern her. That tammed fiscal, Turnbolt's, rakin' heaven an' earth, tae fin' oot what's become o' them."

"Wad it no be better tae gang an' tell him?" observed Archy, timidly.

"Are ye mad!" said Jock, looking at his hopeful *protégé* in utter amazement. "D'ye think am gaun tae rin ma heed intil a hempen gravat? Awa' man, awa'! a thocht ye'd mair gumption nor that. We wad be baith taen up at aince an' brocht afore Sheriff Sharky for exemption, an' then clappit in jail,

maybe for sax or seeven months, till they got full evidence agin' us. Man, dinna think o' that!"

In the meantime Lochspelding was dragged from end to end, day and night, for nearly a month. The Ardupmurchan corps of Volunteer coast artillery fired daily salvoes over its dark and stormy water, in the hope that if they were not lying too snugly at anchor, Alister and Casey, disgusted with the noise and the various reports going about, would quietly yield themselves up and claim the rites of Christian burial, instead of playing at hide and seek among the finnan haddies, and other finny tribes of the fatal loch on which they had been forced to knock under. It would have required the pencil of Turner to depict the weird landscape round the shores of this romantic lake in the pale moonlight, under which the dredgers, in their old coble, pursued the midnight search — now slowly rounding the point of some wooded headland reposing in the shimmer of the silvery moonbeams—anon hidden by the shade of a tenebrous cloud, while the measured click of the rusty rowlocks, heard above the melancholy song of the pullers, came faintly over the rippling wave; then, as if suddenly stopped by some ghostly challenge, the very *oars* would seem to cease their dipping, and to be *listening* amidst death-like silence to a far-off *sough* from the woods beyond—the gloomy borders

of a spirit-world—anon the dipping of blades, and with an elfin ring came the Celtic croon of invisible rowers—

“The herring loves the merry moonlight,
The mackerel loves the wind ;
But the oyster loves the dredger’s song,
For it comes of a gentle kind.”

Once the trawlers thought they were successful. They hooked a heavy body, and there was evidently a weight attached to it.

“Got ! she’ll hae ane o’ them noo,” whispered the boatman who was using the drag.

“Canny ! Sheordie, canny !” said his companions, who were all gaping over the gunwale ; “for fear she’ll slip frae the grapple.”

“*Dhia ! dhia !* put she’ll see his plack coat !” exclaimed one who could apparently see further down than the others into the briny deep ; “there noo !—there noo !—canny, Sheordie ! she’s comin’ ; wheesht !—wheesht !—*Dhia ! Dhia !* put it’s an awfu’ wark ; A’m a’ tremlin’ !”

All gave a prolonged “Ah !” as they brought to the surface a large black Newfoundland dog, with a rope round his neck attached to a huge lump of coal.

“Whaur’s ta whusky, Sheordie ? A dinna feel weel !” exclaimed the individual who had discovered the black coat.

The whisky was passed round—the men sat looking at each other like statues. Not a word was spoken for a few seconds. At last one of them said, timidly—

“ What will we'll do noo ?”

To this question there was no response. Each seemed to be revolving in his mind what course should be adopted. It was evident that some superstitious feeling was creeping over them. Highlanders, particularly those of them who are fishermen, are notorious for being influenced by the slightest circumstance which can be associated with the supernatural. The finding of anything black when looking for something else, is regarded as very ominous. At last a sudden thought seemed to strike one of them, and in answer to the reiterated question—

“ What will we'll do noo ?”

He solemnly and sententiously ejaculated—

“ Tak' anither glaiss o' whusky !”

This answer seemed greatly to relieve the minds of the others, and each wondered how it was that he hadn't thought of it himself. But the proposition was evidently made with the view merely of gaining time for a fuller consideration of the question, in short, an introduction to a contemplated *pis aller*. The same individual, shortly after the suggestion had been practically carried out, again ejaculated—“ What will we'll do noo ?”

The second glass of whisky seemed to have had the effect of enabling them to make up their minds with greater rapidity, for one said in a decided voice,
“ Got ! she’ll gang hame,—she’ll no like this jop ava.”

With a simultaneous movement they seized their oars. As they did so a black cloud passed over the moon, and they pulled like madmen for the shore !

Nothing would persuade them to go out again. When asked why ?—the only answer was that “ they didna ken.”

It appears that there existed a tradition that there was an opening to the infernal regions in Loch Spelding. The individual who fancied he perceived the coat of a drowned man, when he saw that the body brought up was that of a black dog, at once remembered the legend, and thought that they had fished up something sent as a sign of impending evil. From his exclamations and trembling the others knew what was troubling him, and became infected with similar fears.

The only parties who had seen Casey and Fillyerglass in company with Jock M’Service and his factotum, M’Taggart, were Lucky Mackerel, the captain, and the steward of the steamer. The latter had, in all probability, been laughing over the matter with the seaman who had stated in Porterbier, no doubt, to

all appearance seriously, that they had been murdered. Sailors are proverbial for this sort of joking. The fiscal at last offered a reward of twenty pounds, to any party who could give such information as would lead to the apprehension of any person or persons who had been seen with the missing men. The steward, who by this time had left the steamer, tempted by the offer, called upon the fiscal, stating that he had seen the two men in the company of Jock M'Service and his clerk, but omitting to mention that they had gone away by the steamer. This led to M'Service and Archy being at once apprehended. In anticipation of such an eventuality, Jock and his assistant had agreed upon their story, which was simply that the two men had called upon the former, stating that they had been asked to get his assistance in procuring evidence in the Veto case—that he and Archy accompanied them to Lucky Mackerel's, where they were to stay all night—that they had some drink there, when the man Casey insisted upon their going down to the steamer, as he wanted to treat some of the crew—that they accordingly all went, except Archy—that Casey forgot his stick, and as he was too drunk to go back for it, he (Jock) went himself, and that before he returned the steamer was off—the captain not knowing but that they were passengers. Jock took care to see the captain, and warn him as to the course to be pursued.

The prisoners were duly brought before the Sheriff-substitute for examination. They both told the story as arranged. It seemed strange to that legal functionary, that two men who had been sent upon a special mission to Snuffmull, which might probably occupy a week or ten days, should, on the very day of their arrival, go on board a steamer for Ireland, and he stated so to the accused.

"But," said Jock, slyly, "your Lordship must recollect that Casey's a Irishman, an' that he may be ane o' thae Fenians, that wad like tae tak' this wey o' gettin' hame."

"True," said the Sheriff, musing, "there's something in that; but then both the men are amissing, and this Alister Fillyerglass, I understand, was a residerenter in Porterbier, had a wife and family there, and was an elder of the church."

"That's quite true, ma lord," replied Jock; and, determined to stretch a point, he said, "A ken the man an' his faimily weel enuch. His wife and him never agreed thegeither, an' he wud be glade tae get quat o' her. Besides, ma lord," he continued, "even supposing Alister Fillyerglass was no wantin' tae run awa' frae his wife, the Irishman could hardly get awa' frae him, an' he maybe asked us a' doon tae avoid suspicion. They were baith pretty fou, but a was," said Jock, looking very sedate, "quite sober, an' a think, ma

lord, he sent me for the stick to get me oot o' the wey, for the steam was up. A found nae stick; an' afore a got back the boat was awa'. What objec', ma lord, could a hae in murderin' an Irish clerk or a Porterbier elder?"

"Well, certainly," said the Sheriff, looking rather puzzled, "it's a very extraordinary case. Where's the steward, fiscal?"

"He's gone away with one of the Glasgow boats, my lord."

"He was steward of the steamer?"

"Yes, said Jock."

"If M'Service's story is true, he cannot get the reward, for he should have told you that the men went with the steamer,—I hope you didn't pay him?"

"Yes, I did, my lord. M'Service admitted that he was with the men, and when the steward called at my office, considering the terms of the reward, I couldn't refuse to give it to him."

"Then he may have played you a smart Yankee trick," said the Sheriff, laughing. "I advise you to be more cautious in future."

"Well, M'Service, I'm very sorry I have no alternative but to commit both you and your clerk to prison until the return of the steamer from Glasgow, which will not be sooner than a week."

Jock and his man, both with very rueful faces,

were accordingly marched off to jail, amidst a great crowd.

"Eh, me!" exclaimed an old woman, who seemed to be an acquaintance of the hapless sheriff-officer, "wha wud hae thocht that Jock M'Service wud hae committed sic a bluidy murder—cut their throats frae ear tae ear, an' tied stanes till their necks like dowgs! God help us, sic mounsters!"

"A ay thocht it wud come tae that o't," said her crony, whose effects Jock had lately poinded, but was prevented from selling off by his apprehension. "A houp a'll ne'er see him come oot o' that jail, whar he's pit mony a puir cratur, but wi' a hempen gravat roun' his neck!"

"Ye see," remarked a third, "he needit the help o' that ill-faured loon, Airthy M'Taggart, he couldna' murder the twa o' them hissel'. A wunner whilk o' the villains cut their throats?"

"Ou, they wud jist cut ane the piece, a reckon," said an old hen-wife, with an indifference caused probably by having spent the best part of her life in *thrawing* the necks of unfortunate *chuckies*.

"D'ye ken, they tell me," said another, "that they're tae be drawn, hangit, an' quarter't, an' their boeells taen oot and burn't,—sic a brutal murder's ne'er been heerd tell o'."

"They deserve it a'," ejaculated another; "but a

pity puir Mrs M'Taggart, she's a rale dacent body—she'll gae clean distractit—a hear she's in a sair wey aboot it."

"Nae wunner, nae wunner, he's her only bairn!" somebody else remarked.

"Ay, but a rale bad ane," said an old farmer; "he played a fine trick at ma sale. He gat ma best coo for maist naething. Hoo he did it a dinna ken, beenna he was in colleague wi' the auctioneer."

"Ay, an' he did the same wi' ma kist o' drawers," said another.

It was evident from these remarks, that the unfortunate prisoners had few friends among the people of Ochtertory. We must, however, leave them in limbo for the present, to see what has become of Casey and Fillyerglass.

When they were apprehended at Portslush, as related in a previous chapter, they were taken to the police station. It being rather early to bring them before the magistrate, they were locked up in separate cells, until that functionary had breakfasted and gone through the morning journals. This necessary process having been completed, a mild Havanna served the double purpose of digesting both. While employed in this pleasant occupation, with the gauzy wreaths of curling smoke, surrounding like a nimbus, his legal head, the door was suddenly opened, and an

individual in the uniform of the Irish police, made his appearance.

"Well, Phil, what's up this morning?"

"Not much, yer hanner; only we've nabbed two av thim conspirathors."

"Have you, by Jove?" said the magistrate, jumping up from his chair, and taking the weed out of his mouth. "How did you manage it?"

"Well, you see, yer hanner, I wasn't there meself at the first. Mike Doolan was making his rounds—Mike's a good man, yer hanner—(he was shortly to be married to Phil's sister)—when he saw two spalpeens skulking round one av the carners av thim sthreets near the quay, more be token that the Scatch stamer had joost arroived. I meself, was joost about to go down to overhaul her—(the rogue had no such intention, but had been drinking in a shebeen with some men of the Connaught Rangers). Well, yer hanner, Mike at wunst gave chase, when the rascals cut like blazes, and one av thim dhrew something I tuk fur a revolver, which he threu into the wather when he got sight av me coming, but it was a hazy marning, yer hanner. Well, whin the conspirathors saw that it was av no use at all, at all, to cut any more capers, they surrindered their arms."

"They had arms, then?"

"Shure, they had their natral arms, yer hanner."

"You're a quare boy, Phil. Well, go on."

"Well, yer hanner, they surrindered their arms to be handcuffed, and they're now in thim cells that yer hanner got built for the comfort av political offinders."

"Do you know anything about them, Phil?"

"Faix! an' that's joost what I do, yer hanner. One av thim is Pat Ranlan, alias M'Geochagan, alias Murphy, alias Timothy Casey."

"Ah! I recollect him. Didn't he forge a bill upon old O'Dowd?"

"Troth, and that's joost what he did, yer hanner."

"And who's the other, Phil?"

"The other conspirathor's a big hulking Scatchman. I'm sartin shure I've obsarved him in thim parts afore, an' that he's the very bhoy that tuk the muskets and ball carteryidges into Lough Foyle last year. Bedad! but he's an ogly luking spaldeen."

"Well, you'd better bring them to the Court House at 11 o'clock for examination."

"All roight, yer hanner;" and with a military flourish, Phil departed, having in his own opinion made a very favourable impression upon the civic functionary.

At 11 o'clock, accordingly, the prisoners were taken to the Court House, around which a crowd had assembled to see the "conspirathors." There was no

manifestation, however, of ill-will towards them. On the contrary, there seemed to be rather a feeling of sympathy.

"Who's that rough-looking bhoy wid the hairy cap?" said a bystander.

"Shure they tell me he's a Scatchman."

"Sowl, thin, but he's an illigant specimen av his counthry."

"He'd be an oglie custhomer in a party foight, anyhow, Pat."

"Thru for ye, me bhoy; shure he's big an' oglie enough."

"Upon me shurt an' ruffles, an' that's a caimbric oath," observed another, "shure he's the son av the piper that played afore Moses, for Father Brady says he was a Scatchman, an' no beauty aithers."

Alister was certainly no beauty, as remarked by the last speaker. He was a large, and had been a powerfully-built man, with shoulders that a pugilist would have envied. There was a Dirk Hatteraick look, however, about his face, which rendered it anything but agreeable. He had that bull-dog expression of countenance, and prize-fighting condition of body, so dear to the hearts of Englishmen, but which finds no favour now with the Sir Thomas Henrys and Inspector Tanners of this degenerate age. Alack-a-day! the "noble art and science" of Jackson, Cribb, and

Sayers is doomed to die with our old nobility. Manners and manors are changing fast in old England. Alas ! for our modern Corinthians, it is now but one step from the Ring to the cell, from the Race-course to the Court of Bankruptcy. Hastings are peas that sprout early, and are plucked when green. A week or two suffice now to strip our youth of ancestral paddocks and to enrich the sneaking foot-pads of the turf. Yet Tattersalls lives, while the Ring is doomed ! *O tempora ! O mores !* No more are we to witness the ropes and stakes, with their anxious umpire, judicious bottle-holders, and smiling pugs ! What is to become of the Fancy when

. “Nec quisquam ex agmine tanto
Audet adire virum manibusque inducere cæstus ?”

The prisoners having been brought into court, Mike Doolan deposed that he was on duty near the pier about the time the Scotch steamer came in, and met the prisoners, one of whom he knew to be accused of having forged a bill, and to be charged with offences against the government. Thinking that the other might be an accomplice, he had apprehended them both.

“ Quite right, Mike,” said the magistrate. “ I understand that when they first saw you they attempted to cut and run, but when Phil hove in sight they surrendered.”

Mike looked rather taken aback, but a fierce wink from Phil brought him sharp up, and he quickly answered, "Yes, yer hanner."

"That's no true!" said Alister.

"Silence, sur! no interruption," roared out Phil.

"And," resumed the magistrate, "that one of them threw something into the water, which you thought was a revolver."

Mike looked hard at Phil, and Phil winked still more fiercely than before.

"Yes, yer hanner," gulped out Mike.

"Which of the two was it that threw the revolver into the water?"

"I think," said Mike, giving Alister a malicious look, "it was the Scatchman, yer hanner."

"Lord! preserve us, sic leears!" roared out Alister, now almost beside himself with terror.

"Silence, sur!" said Phil, "or it'll be worse for yez."

Phil Mooney gave evidence exactly to the same effect as he stated to the magistrate in the morning, and added, "I'm sartin shure that's the same individual (pointing to Alister) that landed the muskets and ball carterydges in Lough Foyle last year. We gave chase to him an' other two men, but as it was dark, yer hanner, they escaped on board av a smaik lying convaynient about a moile fram the shore."

" Well, but Phil," observed the magistrate, " if it was dark, how could you distinguish him ?"

" Shure, yer hanner, I saw his face clane and clever by the flash av me carbine."

" He might see your face, Phil, by the flash of *your* carbine, but I can't make out how you could see his."

" Did I say *my* carbine, yer hanner ?"

" Of course you did."

" Well thin, shure, I mint *his*."

" Did they fire upon you ?"

" Troth, an' that's joost what they did, yer hanner; and one av their bullets came so class to me left ear, that I've not had the riglar use av it till this blissed day, sorra a bit !"

" It's a' lees, ma lord, frae beginnin' tae end !"

" Silence, sur !" said Phil, in a stern voice ; " you know it's too thrue, nothing but the truth."

" Oh, Lord !" ejaculated poor Alister, whose imagination painted a dangling rope ready to be put round his neck.

" What's your name ?" said the magistrate.

" Alister Fillyerglass, ma lord."

" Well, Alister, I'm not a lord yet, I wish I were; but I believe your judges in Scotland are styled so."

" Do you fill your glass often, Alister ?" said the facetious judge.

"Whiles, ma lord."

"Now, where did you come from, and how do you happen to be in company with the other prisoner?"

"Weel, ma lord, a stop in the village o' Porterbier, an' a'm an elder o' the kirk."

"The church, I suppose you mean.—Well?"

"Weel, ma lord, a was askit tae gang alang wi' this gentleman, wha's a clerk in the offish o' Messrs Horn and Poind, writers, Glasgow, tae Snuffmull."

"To where?" said the magistrate.

"Tae Snuffmull, ma lord."

"Where's that?"

"In the north-west o' Scotland, ma lord."

"Do they make snuff there?"

"A'm no verra shure, but a ken they mak' whuskey."

"Well, give me your mull, Alister, for I see you snuff."

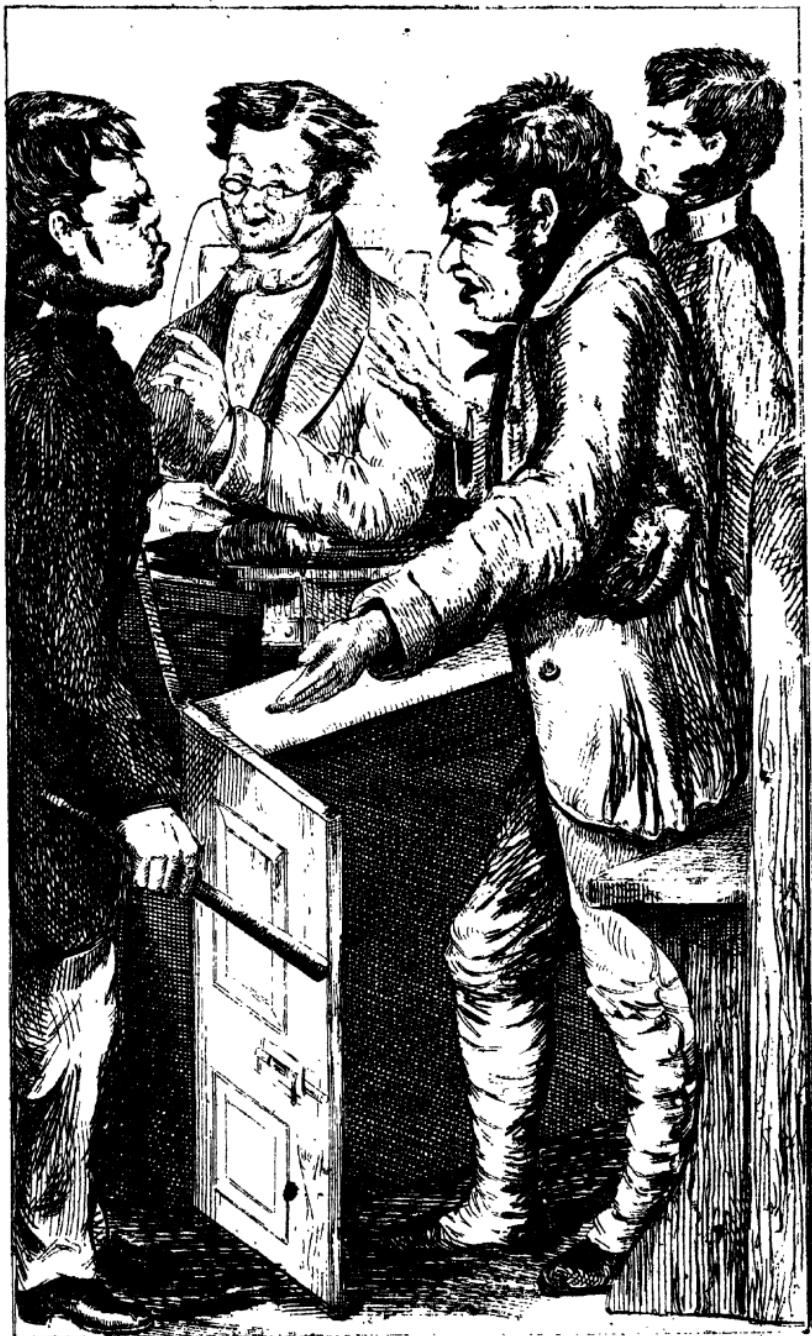
Alister's spirits began to rise as he handed up his snuff-horn.

"Well, go on; what did you go there for?"

"Tae get up evidence in the Veto case."

"In the Veto case. What case is that?"

"They want tae keep a minister oot o' the pairish o' Veto, whar the village o' Porterbier is. He gat a



presentation, as they ca't, frae Government, to the church, an' some o' the folks are trying to keep him oot."

"Very improper thing, Alister, very improper; and you went to get evidence against him, along with the other prisoner, who is the clerk, I suppose, of the solicitors for 'thae folks,' as you call them, who are trying to keep the clergyman out of his benefice; is that it?"

"Yes, ma lord."

"Well, go on."

"Weel, we gat tae Snuffmull, an' gaed alang wi' twa folk therc wha said they were askit tae help us tae get up the evidence, an' we travell't wi' them aboot aucht miles till we cam tae a place whar a steamer was lying, an' they tauld us that wud tak' us tae whar we was tae gang tae for the evidence. They gied us a guid drap o' drink, an' a think they maun hae pit something no canny intilt, for a hae na feelt weel sin' syne. We a' got intill the steamboat, an' a dinna min' ony thing mair till we cam here. They werna in the boat, an' maun jist hae done it to get us awa' frae Snuffmull."

"Served you right, Alister, for being about such unholy work."

"A very loikely story, yer hanner," said Phil Mooney.

"Well, Alister, what you say may be all very true, but you have been found in the very worst company, that of a man who has been frequently convicted, and is now charged with very serious offences. I must just order you both to be sent on to Dublin."

"Can a no be alloood tae write, or see onybody ?" said Alister.

"Not in the meantime, nor until the matter is fully investigated."

As it seemed to be the determination of Phil Mooney to convict poor Alister, he was detained a close prisoner until the depositions with regard to the alleged landing of muskets and ball cartridges in Lough Foyle could be got ready. The solicitor for the Crown having more than enough on his hands, it is probable that Alister would have been detained in prison for a considerable time, had not the steward given information, by which M'Service was apprehended. In consequence of this lucky circumstance, the fiscal, immediately on the arrival of the steamer at Ochtertory, saw the captain, who, having corroborated M'Service's statement, that he had carried the men to Ireland, that gentleman at once liberated M'Service and his clerk, and communicated with the parties who had sent Alister on his mission. They lost no time in procuring the release of the unfortunate elder, who shortly afterwards found

himself once more in his own house, to the great disgust, as it was commonly believed, of his exemplary spouse, who really thought that Alister had become food for the fishes. As for Timothy Casey, he was tried, convicted, and sentenced to transportation for fifteen years.

C H A P T E R X I X.

MATUTINAL REFLECTIONS OF A LAWYER AND A MINISTER UPON THE
THEORY OF CATCHING WEALTHY WIDOWS—WIDOW M'CREESH
—MESSRS HORN AND POIND.

LET us now follow the movements of Sneaker and Poind. We left them in bed in the manse, tormented with certain emotions which usually accompany the inordinate love of money. There was no other love in their case. Poind, when he fairly woke up, began to think of the possibility of finding the widow an easier conquest than Miss M'Phillabeg. He calculated the attractions of the younger damsel by the proportion which fifteen thousand pounds bear to one hundred and fifty thousand and two thousand pounds per annum. It is needless to say that the sum was worked out to its legitimate result. Sneaker had been industriously employed at the same rule of arithmetic.

Miss M'Phillabeg was a little surprised when they met in the morning to find a change come over her admirer. It was so obvious that it escaped the observation of no one but Mrs M'Corkscrew, who, poor soul, troubled herself very little about such matters.

Although a woman may be merely trifling with the feelings of a man, she can seldom brook the idea of his ceasing to feel her power. It touches her vanity. Without even caring a jot about him, she is loath to let him go. Like a cat with a mouse, she will make sport of him as long as she finds him sensible to pain ; when feeling appears to be gone, she will gently pat and turn him over to see if she can restore animation, with a view merely to enjoy his further torture.

Miss Helen was unusually frank and agreeable ; but Poind did not appear to be moved. A little judicious coldness he thought would in any case do no harm.

"I hope you slept well last night, Mr Poind ?" she said, with an interest he had never seen her evince before.

"Oh ! pretty well, thank you ; I'm only a little tired."

"I'm sure you didn't dance very much—you might have done more in that way," she archly replied.

"I shall have enough of it when I get back, no doubt," he observed, carelessly.

When breakfast was over, Poind hurriedly said, "Time for us to go, Mr Sneaker."

"Dear me ! Mr Poind, you're in a great hurry,"

observed Miss M'Phillabeg. "It wants an hour yet of the steamer's time for starting."

"Ah! but I've something to do in the village," he replied, in that cold business tone which a lawyer can so well assume when he likes.

Miss M'Phillabeg was surprised, but she merely said—

"When shall we have the pleasure of seeing you again, Mr Poind?"

"I really can't tell just now,—sometime before the Evidence requires to be led, I suppose."

"Well, good-bye, Miss M'Phillabeg."

"Good-bye, Mr Poind."

"I don't know what's the matter with Mr Poind," observed Miss M'Corkscrew, after his departure.

"Neither do I," said Sneaker. "Why, it was only last night he asked me to request you to use your influence with your fair cousin on his behalf! A sudden change has come over him."

"I saw you and him reading a letter very earnestly on the sofa last night," observed Miss M'Phillabeg.

"What was that?" said Sneaker, reddening.

"I saw you reading a letter with him last night."

"Oh, yes," he replied, regaining his self-possession, "it was about the case."

Miss M'Phillabeg didn't believe it. She saw

through both Sneaker and Poind, and was satisfied that it must have been about something else.

In due course, the former took his leave, and he and the estimable lawyer met on board the steamer bound for Glasgow. Their conversation, as may well be expected, very soon turned upon the subjects which most deeply engrossed their minds.

"Did you mention," said Poind, "my small matter to Miss M'Corkscrew?"

"I did."

"Well, what did she say?"

"Oh! that she would tell her cousin."

"Did Miss M'Corkscrew hold out any hope?"

"Of course she couldn't say until she had spoken to her, and learned her sentiments."

"How did you get on yourself?" Sneaker continued. "I saw you making, what I took to be, fierce love, at the other side of the room."

"Well, not so bad, I think. I asked permission to write to her."

"Did she give it?"

"No; but she didn't refuse. She left it to my own discretion."

"I look upon that as a good sign," said Sneaker (knowing very well that it was not), "I regard it as a tacit consent."

"Do you think I should write to her?"

"Certainly, after having proposed to do it."

"Well, I think I shall."

"By the bye," said Poind abruptly, "about that aunt of Miss M'Corkscrew's?"

"What about that aunt of Miss M'Corkscrew's?" said Sneaker, fiercely, while his face got deadly pale.

"Oh, nothing!" said Poind, turning red, "but—but I was going to ask you whether you could depend upon getting—"

"Getting what?" said Sneaker, evidently alarmed.

"Why, getting her," said Poind, not knowing exactly what to say, "to execute a deed conferring an absolute right in favour of Miss M'Corkscrew, to the five thousand."

Their eyes met—instinctively they read each others' thoughts. From that moment they were mortal enemies.

Poind had fancied, from the manner in which Sneaker had received the information with regard to Miss M'Corkscrew's interest in her aunt's settlement, and from the reference to the latter being comparatively young and good looking, and to her having asked him to call again, and other particulars which he had mentioned, that he was probably thinking of making advances to the wealthy widow—and he was right.

On the other hand, Sneaker, like one who believes

he has discovered a treasure, had become nervous at the bare idea of a man like Poind becoming aware of it. Guilty himself of dishonourable intentions, he could not help fancying that Poind, having extremely little chance of succeeding with Miss M'Phillabeg, would turn his thoughts in the direction of Crossmungo. It was the policy, however, of both parties, not to evince, by any overt act, the existence of such an idea.

It was now, then, to be a trial of fence between the Law and the Prophets; so Sneaker, affecting to be merely annoyed at the idea of asking such a thing from the aunt as Poind had proposed, said—

“ How, in the name of goodness, Mr Poind, could I make such a proposition to a person I know nothing about, as to alter her will ? ”

“ Well, perhaps not,” said Poind, seeing his adversary's drift, “ but you seemed so anxious about it last night that I was going to suggest to you when you stopped me that perhaps Miss M'Corkscrew could get her to do it, or if I could be of any use I would have no objections to call upon her on the subject.”

There was a good deal of art in this way of putting it, for it had an air of frankness calculated to throw a less wily man than Sneaker off his guard, but jealousy had struck its roots too deep, so he hastily said—

"I couldn't think for a moment of such a thing. In fact, I have no intention of calling upon the aunt again, in case she should imagine that I had some such object in view."

Here the matter dropped. The conversation turned upon other subjects, but it was so constrained that each of the interlocutors wished the other a hundred miles off.

At length the boat arrived at its destination, and, shaking hands with extreme cordiality, they parted bitter enemies, to meet again rather unexpectedly.

Mrs M'Creesh, the unwitting cause of this rivalry, whom Poind had never seen, and Sneaker had only spoken to once in his life, was the relict of Mr Hugh M'Creesh, soap and tallow chandler, Old Wynd, Glasgow. He had been what is called a "canny, shrewd Scotchman," and had accumulated a large fortune. He had risen from nothing. He was hard-working, close-fisted, and frugal. He married early in life. Euphemia Dougal was a servant lass in the house of Bailie M'Candler, with whom M'Creesh was serving his time, and Hugh had occasion to go frequently backwards and forwards between the work and the house in the Paisley Road. Phemie, as he used to call her; was stout, good-looking, accustomed to hard work, and very active and tidy. She had been for about four or five years with

the Bailie, a jolly bachelor, and had given so much satisfaction that her master would not willingly part with her. Her good qualities did not escape the observation of Hugh any more than her good looks, so, having only six months of his apprenticeship to serve, he one evening took it into his head to dress in his best and direct his steps to the Paisley Road. M'Creesh was one of those men who, having once determined to do a thing, did it. He never allowed "the pale cast of thought" to turn the current of his intentions awry, nor "enterprises of great pith and moment" to "lose the name of action." So he soon found himself at the door of Bailie McCandler. Phemie received him, as usual, with a laugh and a jest, for she had some share of what the French call *esprit*, a word for which we have no exact equivalent. There had been a good deal of what is called "daffin" and "touzling," and perhaps kissing, going on previously, between the apprentice of the worthy soap-boiler, and his buxom domestic; but there was nothing to lead her to suppose that he had any serious intentions, and then, of course, he was only an apprentice, so with the salutation of "Weel, hoo are ye aff for soap the day?" she asked him to sit down.

"Are ye gaun tae a ball or tae see yer sweetheart the nicht; that ye're dressed up sae braw?" she asked, with a roguish look.

"A'm come tae see ma sweetheart," replied the bold Sir Hugh, embracing the not reluctant Phemie, and impressing half-a-dozen smacks upon her rosy lips.

"Dear me ! haud aff,—ye hae touzled a' ma hair. If the Bailie rings for mair het water for his toddy a dinna ken what a'll dae."

"Ou, jist cry oot that the water is'na bilin'."

"A think *ye're* bilin'—ye hae scauded a' ma mooth. It's as het's fire, an' a think it'll be a' blistered the morn."

Hugh laughed. *

"Noo, Phemie," said he, "there's nae uise gaun aboot the bush. Ma time 'ill be oot this day sax months. A've saved some siller, an' a mean tae save as muckle mair's a can, an' if ye'll hae me, we'll get mairied as sune aifter that's ye like."

Phemie looked down, but said nothing. She had been told by her mother that this was a necessary preliminary before consent ; that it was usual for a young woman to be pressed—as little as possible, but still a little, to prevent her husband from saying afterwards that she had jumped at him "like a cock at a grosat."

"What d'ye say, Phemie ?"

No answer.

Phemie was looking intently at the point of her slipper, which she was moving uneasily backwards

and forwards on the kitchen fender, while her hands were crossed in front of her apron.

Hugh was too shrewd a fellow not to see how the land lay, so he said—

“A’m thinking, Phemic, a’ll hae tae mak’ a wheen mair blisters!”

“Oh! dinna dae that,” said Phemic, in a tone which Hugh construed into an invitation to do it. Jumping up he repeated his previous performance, so effectively, that Phemic, doubtless to save herself from further punishment, ejaculated—

“Oh! yes,” in a voice almost smothered with kisses, and received as a reward a smack which might have been heard by the honest Bailie at his toddy up stairs, had he not been busily engaged in reading a report in the *Daily Growler*, of a meeting of Council, in which Bailie Steel the hardware merchant had ironically said, among other wicked things, that he, Bailie M'Candler, was a great and shining light in the community—in fact, worthy of the days of ancient Greece.

In due time Phemic Dougal became Mrs M'Creesh. Her kind-hearted master, in recognition of her faithful services, and also to help his late apprentice, gave her a *tocher* of thirty pounds, which sum, with their own savings, enabled them to furnish a small house. After working for several years as a

journeyman, M'Creesh began business on his own account, and, as we have seen, he ultimately realized a very large fortune. He died, leaving everything to his dear Phemie, and it was duly recorded in the newspapers of the day that "he was much and deeply lamented."

When Poind arrived at the chambers in Candleriggs, he found a good deal of business to get through. He did not see his partner for some days, as he was from home. On his return, however, they had a long conversation on business matters, on the termination of which Horn laughingly said—

"Oh! I forgot to congratulate you upon your conquest of an heiress in the parish of Veto. Allow me to do so now," shaking the slightly abashed Poind warmly by the hand.

"Really," said Poind, "I don't——"

"Oh! don't blush now," said his partner; "I know all about it. Miss M'Phillabeg is the lady. She has fifteen thousand at her own disposal. Why, man alive, it's all over the city! I've been twitted about it in the Exchange. Almost every member of our bar has desired me to convey to you his felicitations. Willie Sneel said to me—"Well, Horn, Poind's a fortunate fellow! Church cases must be looking up; I sometimes hardly got my travelling expenses out of them, but I shall recommend our

young practitioners to keep an eye upon them now."

Poor Poind looked rather confused.—"It must have been that confounded fellow Sneaker," he muttered to himself, "that spread this report to damage me, believing that I was sure to be unsuccessful, but I'll perhaps check-mate him."

Poind thought the best plan was to unbosom himself at once to his partner.

Horn was what might be called a jolly lawyer, slightly more so even than Garrempey—that is, he was more boisterous. The popular idea, associated with the *personnel* of "a man of the law"—we mean of course, the seniors of the profession—used to be that of an attenuated and truculent looking gentleman in black, with a hooked nose, cold penetrating, grey eyes, bushy eyebrows, thin cheeks, and skin of a parchment colour, tightly stretched over the facial bones—pretty much as one would expect to find in a creditably finished drum. He was supposed to wear a frilled shirt, with a spot of the style, which marked the linen of our friend Garrempey. It was a matter of course that he should wear a white neck-cloth, and a watch, with the usual amount of *quincailleerie* dangling from the fob. This type of lawyer is, however, now extinct, and must be looked for in Kay's Portraits, or in some similar work. Horn was

certainly not of this class. So far as dress was concerned, he might have been taken for a well-to-do sheep farmer. He had a decidedly rubicund face, a cheerful expression of countenance, with twinkling grey eyes, indicative of knowingness rather than cunning. Moreover, he had what, according to the Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers, the first Napoleon considered to be a great advantage for a man to have, to wit, plenty of nose—one besides which bore indications that its proprietor ordinarily imbibed something stronger than cold water. Yet, we have seen similar noses upon the faces of individuals who were total abstainers all their lives !

To this guide, philosopher, and friend, then, Poind unburdened his mind. What it was that he unburdened will be made to appear in due time.

CHAPTER XX.

SOME TYPES OF LAWYERS—MODERN FACULTIES OF FREEBOOTERS—
BLACK MAIL—A FEW WORDS WITH OUR OLD NOBILITY.

THE four types of lawyers already referred to exhaust pretty nearly the classification of the most remarkable specimens of that useful and much abused race in what may be called its lower stratification. *First*, the gentleman who has withdrawn himself from the present century, and who is now only to be found among Kay's Portraits. He may be called the chamber lawyer. *Second*, the man of the Garrempey school, which is a school nearly expiring. He may be called the metropolitan court lawyer. *Third*, the type of Horn, which, upon the whole, is improving. Horn may be called the provincial court lawyer; and *Fourth*, the lowest type of all, that of Poind. He is the *leguleius et circumscriptor* of the Romans, the *avoué de bas étage* of the French, the *winkeladvocat* of the German, and the well-known *pettifogger* of our own more expressive English—more expressive, in this word at least, which would seem to have required a combination of the two latter languages to form it.

A modernized specimen of the first type is the chamber lawyer, *pur sang*, who has a holy horror of court practice, and the face of a contradictor. It is his delight to surround his room with an imposing display of dark green or chrome-yellow tin boxes, many of which are half filled with old newspapers, covered, perhaps, with ancient drafts, over which there is a thin layer of titles, giving the heaped up box the appearance of containing a plethora of deeds gaping for air. Instruments of sasine, precepts of *Clare constat*, and various other precepts not included in the ten commandments, look out piteously upon you with evident marks of having been most cruelly crushed, while yards of red tape depend limply like flags of distress, from the wretched box, suffocated with the supposed titles of **WHITE CHOKER, ESQUIRE, OF MUFFTOWN**, and from various other unfortunate boxes labelled, **THE WINDYBAG TITLES, THE SKY AND AYR ATMOSPHERIC DIRECT RAILWAY, THE SUN AND MOON INSURANCE COY., THE CUMBERLAND AND WASTEMORELAND MINING COY., THE CLAYSLAP AND CLAPTRAP BRICK AND TILE-WORK (LIMITED), et cetera.** The callous individual who has done these deeds will be found sitting in an old-fashioned arm chair, with an air admirably expressive of having an overwhelming amount of work to do, and the quiet consciousness of power to get through with it.

His consulting table is overlaid with papers, books, plans, books of reference, and other *impedimenta*, principally begged or borrowed from other solicitors. It may be in purposed disarray, or in the most finical order, according as the *genius loci* has the idea strong upon him that the one or the other arrangement will make the more favourable impression upon those whom he covets as clients. He has, perhaps, nothing particular to do of a morning or an afternoon, or, horrible to think of, even for a day, but that is a phase of his professional existence which must, on no account be cognizable by anybody but himself. So it is that he is certain to have before him some musty fusty old draft prepared by his grandfather, or by the grandfather of somebody else, being perhaps the Trust disposition and deed of settlement of the deceased Inverfarigaig—and a bottle of red ink with a pen stuck in it—generally a quill, for the chamber lawyer is particular about pens. With this pen, upon the least sound of approaching footsteps, he makes alarming scores up and down and across the hapless draft, cutting and slashing with remorseless severity, and with an air of the most concentrated wisdom, several highly important clauses of the voluminous deed which had cost poor Inverfarigaig many a sleepless night, and not a few pounds, besides no little thinking to the conveyancer who had pre-

pared it. The morning paper, in which he is industriously reading the report of the last meeting of the Hobanoban Railway Company, lies conveniently on the top of his waste paper basket, which is so situated that it cannot be seen when you first enter his room. On the faintest sound indicative of the welcome approach of a client, he can, by a deft stroke of his right hand, drive the helpless journal in a twinkling inside of the basket, into the peculiar shape which is known as that of a "cocked hat," while, by the same rapid sweep, he contrives to seize the aforesaid red ink pen, and to resume his scoring, all with an ease and finish much more remarkable than the loading and firing of the *Zündnadelgewehr*, even when it is manipulated by the most adroit of Prussian *Jägers*. The wary draftsman may sometimes indeed be caught, but very rarely, while in the highly unprofessional attitude of reading a newspaper during business hours, in which case he feels quite as horrified as Venus no doubt would, if you happened to surprise her in her bath. We only know of this event having occurred once—not the bath business—but then, it should be stated, that the chamber lawyer was thoroughly absorbed in reading the report of the aforesaid Hobanoban meeting, and that his fit of super-abstraction was caused by gloating over a nasty little bit of an intrigue, by which he had succeeded in getting

himself named as one of the scrutineers of the votes given at that meeting, with the view of laying a foundation for more intimate and profitable relations with the affairs of that distressed company.

Did you ever remark any occasion on which you found the chamber lawyer dictating a letter or a deed to his clerk? If you knocked at his door, and listened for a few seconds, you would hear that the soft and apparently friendly tone in which he had been dictating was immediately, on hearing your footstep or knock, changed into one of coarse vehemence towards the quiet and submissive looking young man who was acting as his amanuensis; and as you entered, and were coming forward to his table, you probably heard some nasty, snappish, and peremptory remark addressed to the clerk, as he was leaving his chair, all to show you that the man who made it was the master, and that the other was his drudge. Yet, after your departure, the chamber lawyer, on the return of his assistant, will resume his work in the same soft and friendly way as before; for the clerk perhaps knows something more than his employer, who does not want to irritate him too far, although his miserable vanity at times tempts him to raise his own importance at the expense of the feelings of, it may be, a much better man.

*The chamber lawyer delights in going over pro-

gresses of writs, in dealing with heavy burdens over property, and in imposing and re-imposing these burdens as often as possible, and, therefore, however hard they may be to be borne—with regard to which he cares nothing, as he never bears them himself—it is his interest that they should be borne by somebody. The imposition of burdens is therefore said to be an operation which the chamber lawyer has no objection to recommend when there may be no great necessity for it. A consequence of all this is that the chamber lawyer has laid himself open to the charge of having been specially referred to in St Luke, 11th chapter and 46th verse, where it is said, “Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.” And again, in the 48th verse, “Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the *deeds* of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.”

Turn we now to the race of Gabby, W. S., S.S.C., C.S., or any other S., who assumes to be the metropolitan court lawyer, so far as anybody may be so who is not allowed to open his mouth in court, except from a back seat in a whisper to his counsel. Gabby generally executes this movement with a face as portentously fearful as if he were doing a most heinous and unlawful act, watching all the while with

the tail of his eye that Lord Daisy doesn't see him do it. He is in mortal terror lest that erudite and irritable judge should take it into his combative head, that he is speaking in louder tones than the aforesaid whisper, and this he is not unlikely to do, judging from the violent contortions which Gabby is permitting his mouth to undergo, in a spasmodic attempt to speak low, and from the careful precautions which he is taking, by curving his hand inwards from the bridge of his nose to the heel of his chin, to prevent the possibility of the sound of his voice escaping anywhere except into the upturned *lug* of Erskine Balfour Stair, Esq., M.A., Advocate. From the bothered and somewhat agonised expression upon the countenance of that learned gentleman, he is evidently longing to be relieved from the devil's tattoo, which is being played upon the drum of his ear; but, most likely, from the intolerable effluvium of Gabby's breath. How does it come that people with this exceedingly undesirable odour *will* insist on always whispering close to your ear?

Gabby's chief accomplishment is supposed to be a familiarity with what is called "Parliament House practice," which, for the most part, consists in knowing when you should "box" certain papers with the proper clerk, or box the ears of the very improper clerk who refuses to consent to your doing so when you have forgotten to do it. His principal concern is

to place himself *en rapport* with that indispensable but much despised individual, the “country agent.” To any young man who has given out that he is leaving Auld Reekie for the provinces, Gabby is wonderfully bland and attentive; for he knows not the day nor the hour when he may send him a “Jury Trial.” An unpleasant trait in Gabby’s character, however, in the eyes of the said country agents is, that he seems to have acquired an ineradicable belief that Providence specially instituted provincial “writers” for the purpose of being providers of business for lawyers in the metropolis, and that the country agent, failing his client, or the client failing, which often means the same thing, should be liable to him, Gabby, for payment of his account to the uttermost button of his trowsers, or to his uttermost sporran, if he wears kilts, as it is now settled law that “you can’t take the breeks off a hielandman.” Another unpleasant feature in Gabby’s character, for his country correspondent we mean, for it is a hugely facetious one for Gabby himself, is, that he expects the country agent to do all the work of getting up cases, drawing papers, taking precognitions, *et cetera*, while he, backed by a gentleman who is called the Auditor of the Court of Session, and who was at one time a Gabby himself, resolves that the country agent shall be allowed nothing, or next to

nothing, for doing the work, but that all the pay shall go to him—Gabby—for carrying it home; home being understood as the finishing shop in Moray Place, or Herriot Row, or wherever it may happen to be in the capital, where the work is examined by a gentleman called Counsel, and, if need be, polished up by him, before being taken to the market at the Parliament House.

Gabby, besides being greedy, and by no means a lover of hard work, is said to have no mind or will of his own, except that of reminding you to send him remittances; and although he has been brought up all his life about the great legal engine, he won't dare to meddle with it himself, even to the taking a belt off the machinery, or so much as making a motion, without counsel. He is understood to feel mightily relieved when his correspondent from the country comes to town, to take off his shoulders the intolerable weight of doing something. The latter being an individual of a more robust will, and knowing more about the operation of the said machine, or believing that he does, is oftentimes self-sufficient enough to enter in where the angel Gabby fears to tread; and should he get one or two of his fingers nipped off in consequence, which he sometimes does, he contributes thereby very materially to the hilarity of Gabby, without being aware of it,

Such is the race of Gabby; but there are sundry signs and portents in the horizon which have been interpreted by the soothsayers as signifying that his monopolizing career will soon have an end, and this is just as it should be. When all solicitors in Scotland are put upon a footing of perfect equality, it will be better for them, for their clients, and for the counsel they must employ. As it is, people rather bear the ills they have in the inferior courts, than fly to others that they know too well of in the Court of Session.

The race of Horn, being reared in the country, is more robust in its constitution, but is not much superior as a whole to the race of Gabby, except, perhaps, that it has a more varied training. It is more self-reliant, and pretty often somewhat self-sufficient. It is *par excellence* the provincial court lawyer. The court lawyer's great ambition, however, is to ally himself, as soon as possible, with a chamber lawyer of standing, and thus to hunt in couples; and, to the credit of the chamber lawyer be it said, he is not slow in perceiving that a young man with an expert pair of legs and a glib tongue may be of considerable use to him for what is called outside work, and so it is that they very often do bark and bite in company. If the business improve, the court lawyer takes the earliest opportunity of suggesting to his senior that he feels himself overworked. This crisis, however, rarely ar-

rives until his extraordinary love of hearing himself talk has very much subsided, having first succeeded in wearying others with it, and finally himself, and he frequently begins to wonder why he became a court lawyer at all, when so many more guineas might be made while he is doing nothing but listening to the long and weary orations of other court lawyers like himself, which he does under very great compulsion, and with uniform disgust. He begins insensibly to ponder over that forcible verse in the Proverbs, "in all labour there is profit, but the talk of the lips tendeth to penury." So having serious designs upon the eldest daughter of his landlord, a substantial "portioner," or, it may be, a "*bien lairdie*" in Trades-ton — he, with the consent and concurrence of his senior, sinks gracefully into a second-hand easy-chair, purchased at the last sale of furniture in M'Tearem's auction rooms, and is *hinc inde* transformed into a consulting lawyer. Henceforward, the hall of the Sheriff Court rings with his voice no more, unless, indeed, upon very special occasions, to which the court lawyer who succeeds him is not supposed to be equal. He never merges, however, into the chamber lawyer proper; him, we mean, who almost sinks into his goloshes at the very mention of a court-house, and quakes as he passes the doors thereof.

The modern provincial Scottish lawyer of the low

country is supposed to be qualified for conducting court, or any other legal business, if he can speak and read English, without mixing it up with broad Scotch. If he hails from the western capital, he generally struggles to acquire a serviceable command of the former tongue, by attending some academy in the Gorbals, where elocution is taught in the evening, or somewhere in the more aristocratic environs of Partick. He must also know the principal rules of arithmetic, and as much English grammar as to be able to tell, after reasonable consideration, when a nominative is lurking behind the verb to be, or when it is playfully skipping before it, and to understand as much Latin as will ensure that he does not look upon *locus pœnitentiaæ* as synonymous with the Perth Penitentiary, or the sentence, "*Cæsar transit Alpes summa diligentia,*" as signifying that Julius crossed these mountains on the top of a diligence, or by the Mont Cenis Railway—when it is finished. If he be up to all this, and he is generally supposed to be, if he has attended a class in the University of Glasgow, at an hour in the morning fixed for the benefit of poor humanity, he will do, with a smattering of what is called "logic" by way of ballast, it being always assumed that he is the possessor of as much geography as will enable him to tell the windings of the Dnieper, the precise course of the

Bug, the boundaries of Dalmarnock, and the source of the Molendinar burn.

The great obstacle, however, in the way of the Scottish solicitor is not an educational, but a money one. It happens so, because certain bodies in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, and Aberdeen have obtained, either by Crown Charters, or Acts of Parliament, or by both, a monopoly of practice in these places; that is to say, they can prevent and do prevent everybody except themselves and their own apprentices, from earning their bread as lawyers there, with the exception, as in Glasgow, that they will allow you to do so upon payment of an exorbitant sum by way of entry-money. In England a solicitor once admitted in any city or town, is entitled to practice over the whole kingdom. It is not so, however, in Scotland, where, although you have been admitted in one county, you require to be examined and re-examined, and pay fees, and submit to the regulations of the procurators of every other county in the courts of which you may propose to practice. For instance, in Glasgow, a number of "writers" obtained in 1796 a charter from King George III., giving them the monopoly of practising in that city. In 1833, curiously enough in the first Parliament under the first Reform Bill, they obtained an Act supplementary to that charter,

to the effect of enabling them to admit parties who had not served an apprenticeship with themselves, upon payment of very heavy entrance-fees, amounting to some hundreds of pounds, as they found that their funds would be all the better of a tax upon such persons as would be willing to enter upon any terms. The consequence was, that if you were the son or son-in-law of a member, you would be allowed to practise by paying the sum of £84. If you were not, and had not served an apprenticeship with a Glasgow writer, you had to pay, say, from £250 to £300, and £4 for every year you were above twenty-five. It thus happens that, supposing you to be a citizen of London, or, indeed, of any other city or town in the empire, and that after sending your son to Eton, perhaps to Tours in France, and to a Gymnasium in Germany, you chose to make a Scottish solicitor of him—although you never will be so insane as to do anything of the sort—suppose, however, that, intending to do it, and to prevent your son from aspirating his h's, and saying “fellah,” and “yaas,” and to keep him at the same time at a safe distance from the region of broad Scotch, you chose to send him to the capital of the Highlands—Inverness, where he serves a regular apprenticeship to a solicitor, and is afterwards admitted, and practises there. Assuming that he finds that zone too limited

for his ambition, that he comes to Glasgow and applies for admission to the Faculty of Procurators of that city. We shall suppose him asked to meet with the committee of that august body, and that the respectable chairman thereof, had not gone to Oxford, and had not exchanged, as Jeffrey did there, his broad Scotch for narrow English—the following is as likely as not the dialogue which would ensue between your whilom *filiusfamilias* and the said chairman.

“ Ye’re Mr Algernon Sydney Howard, are ye ?”

“ Yes.”

“ Ye want tae get intae oor Faculty ?”

“ Yes.”

“ Whaur d’ye come frae ?”

“ I come from Inverness ; but I’m an Englishman, born in London.”

“ An Englishman, are ye ?”—and the chairman gives a dubious look to his *confrères*.

“ What’s yer age ?”

“ Thirty.”

“ Were ye an apprentice under oor charter ?”

“ No.”

“ Is yer faither a member o’ Faculty ?”

“ No.”

“ Was yer granfaither ?”

“ Not that I know of.”

"Hem—Are ye mairried tae the dochter o' a member?"

"No."

"Then, what are ye at a'?"

"Why, I'm a member of the Faculty of Procurators of Inverness, where I served a regular apprenticeship. I have studied law at the Universities in Scotland, and have obtained first prizes in Scots law and Conveyancing, and have read Roman law on the Continent."

"Aweel, ye see, hed ye been the son o' a member, or a granson, or a son-in-law, we wud alloo ye tae practeese for the soom o' achty-four puns sterling; but as ye're no that, ye'll hae tae pey twa hundert an' fifty puns sterling; an' as ye're five years aboon twenty-five, that'll be four puns *per annum* additional —makin' *in cumulo*, the soom o' twa hundert an' seventy puns guid sterling money o' the realm."

"But maybe, Dean," says a venerable looking gentleman, who seems to take an interest in Algernon, "the young man may mak' up his mind tae mairry ane o' oor dochters."

"Aweel, aweel, but he maun dae't first, ye ken. It wadna dae tae admit him, an' lippen tae what he micht dae ahint haun! He's an Englisher, ye see."

"But what's all the two hundred and seventy pounds for?" asks Algernon, in his simplicity, not

knowing about the Widows' Fund, and other matters.

"Dear me! d'ye hear that?" says the chairman, turning round with a look of amazement, to his brethren. "D'ye no ken that it's for the Widows' Fun', an' ither sik like chairges o' the Faculty?"

"But I've no widow, sir, and don't intend to have one."

"A daursay no; but that's naething tae huz. If ye haenna ane, ye ocht to hae; an', at ony rate, yer fees 'll gang tae pey for the widows o' ithers."

"Deuced hard, certainly, although I daresay it's good fun for the widows!"

"Hae ye the cash wi' ye?"

"*Non habeo pecuniam domine.*"

"Ye hae been a domine, hae ye? What's that tae dae wi' peyin' cash, a wud like tae ken?"

"I said, sir, that I hadn't the money."

"Nae siller! Gude sake! Did ye railly expec' tae get in tae oor Faculty without siller?"

"I paid all fees and rates to government previous to being admitted at Inverness."

"A daursay, but that's no here. We're no sae far North's that."

"You're a vast deal too much so for me though!" observes Algernon, rather nettled. "Is there anything else you require besides money?"

"Ou ay—Ye're no an M.A. o' oor University, are ye?"

"No; I was educated at Eton, at Tours, in France, and Heidelberg, in Germany. I took no degree. I'm not a believer in degrees."

"A weel, ye'll hae tae attend the Laitin an' Logic claisses in the University, an' ye'll hae tae be examened in English, an' Grammar, an' Jography, an' Arithmeetic."

"But, my dear sir, I have been examined in all these things already! I've as much Greek, Latin, French, German, and English; Mathematics, Natural and Moral Philosophy, and Logic, as will enable me to sit down and be examined now. I'll read Homer with you, write a Latin thesis, talk with you in French and German, or for that matter in Gaelic, or broad Scotch if you like. I'll take up the Logic of Messieurs de Port Royal, or of Archbishop Whately, and show you that Mr John Stuart Mill *on* Sir William Hamilton's philosophy doesn't necessarily imply that the said John Stuart Mill is *up* to it. I'll solve any problem in Euclid for you, and allow you to take Simson's, as he was a Glasgow professor."

"We wud raither tak' a gill wi' ye, young man. Ye're a verra clever chiel, nae doot, but ye'd be nane the waur o' attendin' the humainity claiss, an' the Logic in the mornin', for twa three sessions. It'll

be rale guid for yer health, an' it'll agree verra weel wi' the professors."

"And will keep me for two or three years from being admitted to practice, even although I had the cash to give you to-morrow!"

"A weel, it'll hae that effec', nae doot, but it'll keep ye oot o' hairm's wey."

"You mean that it will keep me out of practice?"

"Ye ken, ye daurna practeese without being admittit."

"There's just one other thing, Sir, I beg to ask."

"Weel."

"Do you wear any particular dress?"

"Ou, jist a guid shuit o' black claes, ye ken, an' a paramatta goon."

"I see. Well, I bought a black dress suit and a gown the other day in London. Will these do, or is there any other shop in the High Street, patronised by the Faculty, where I should have got them?"

"Ou, a don't think sae; but there'll be a meetin' the morn, an' a'll see."

"It's no a bad idee that! A think oor charter gies us pooer tae ack upon 't if we like."

This state of matters then at once suggests the important question—

Is Sandy to be permitted to carry on this system of BLACK MAIL any longer?

It is a question which we specially address to Mr Gladstone, and also to Mr Bright—the declared enemy of all monopolies.

Time was when black mail was levied in Scotland with impunity—when you couldn't travel through the highlands, at all events in safety, without paying Rob Roy, or some other robber, for a passport. In its day this was a necessity, for you were not merely allowed to pass through the defiles of Killiecrankie, or over the Mam Ratagan, but Robert took care that you were not maltreated—ill-treated that is, for nobody could insure you against the former treatment. But if the bold outlaw had, in addition to preying upon the public himself, imposed a payment of some two or three hundred merks Scots upon every one who attempted to practise the calling of “killing a shentlemans for himsel’,” he would be doing neither more nor less than what the Glasgow Faculty, and other similar Faculties in Scotland, are doing at the present day, with this difference merely, that whereas Rob Roy without the leave of anybody, did that which was unlawful *in itself*, these bodies, with the permission of somebody who hadn’t power to give it, are doing that, which, although it may be lawful, because it was *permitted*, we maintain it was *not* lawful to permit. If there is one principle of natural law or

justice more evident than another, we take it to be this, that every man in a free country ought to possess the right to earn his bread in any legitimate vocation, qualified merely by rules of public policy as to his mode and manner of doing it, and subject only to national burdens, such as taxation, in carrying it on. That right may, indeed, be said to be the measure of the duty which is incumbent upon every member of the community, of supporting himself and those who are legally dependent upon him. If this be true, we suppose it will not be denied that in this country, at least, all governing power proceeds from the people, and that the mere authority to rule, which they have conferred, does not necessarily involve a power on the part of the rulers to deprive in whole or in part the nation, or any portion of it, of the fundamental right to earn its bread. But if King George the III. in 1796, gave by a charter to Sandy McTeevish, Bauldy Rodger, and Tonald Campbell, writers, conveyancers, and notaries public in Glasgow, and to all and sundry, their bairns and apprentices, the privilege of exercising there the profession of the law, and of receiving all the profits and emoluments thereof, to the exclusion of everybody else; and if the first reformed Parliament of the British House of Commons, upon 18th June, 1833, ratified that charter by a private Act, then we have no hesita-

tion in saying that King George the III., of happy memory, if he did not do a great and grievous wrong—a naughty act which no British sovereign is supposed, *fictione juris*, to be capable of doing—did at least do that which he was not authorised to do, and that the aforesaid Parliament was guilty of a very wrong and improper act in conveying away rights which did not belong to it, and which it had no authority to alienate. By doing so, it was not only circumscribing the natural area of national labour, but, *pro tanto*, it was absolving the nation from its duty to work, and from its obligation to contribute to the common fund of taxation. It can surely never be contended, that if you convey away to others the right to work in a particular place, and exclude me, unless I am able to purchase the right to do it, and I am not able to make that purchase, and am not fit to earn my bread in any other way in another place,—you can expect me to perform the duty of labour, and to pay taxes upon means which I might have been able to earn, but cannot, because you have alienated to others the subject out of which alone I could have produced them. No rule of law, and no logic founded upon the mere *præsumptio juris* that the acts of the Parliament are the acts of the people through their representatives, can ever support the validity of such grants as these; for, by

sending a man to represent me in a general Assembly, I never can be *presumed* to have given him power to assign away my natural rights to any one or every one who may sneak in by a back door with a private bill requesting a part of my property, to wit, my right to labour, qualified only by rules of public policy, and subject only to national burdens. It never could be justified by public policy, and the fees charged by the various Faculties in Scotland, are private profits, and not national burdens, which have to be paid by the unfortunate solicitor over and above the detestable **BLACK MAIL** so unlawfully and recklessly permitted to be imposed upon him.

It is lamentable to think, not merely that this system is still in full vigour in Scotland, but that, with all our boasting about free trade, it was only in 1847, by the Act 9 and 10 Vict. cap. 17, that even the labouring classes of these realms were freed from the oppressive and obnoxious exactions of guilds and crafts, the abolition of which corporations in France, had rendered labour in that country free so far back as 1791. It is thus true that little more than twenty years ago the deacon and brethren of the shoemakers, and similar incorporations in Glasgow and other places, could prevent a man who had served his apprenticeship in some other town in Scotland from working for himself in that city, or elsewhere, unless

where he had made himself free of the craft—by allowing them to make free with perhaps all his hard-earned savings! It was somewhat different in England, where the right to work as a journeyman over the whole kingdom was acquired by a seven years' apprenticeship. It was bad enough, however, at the best, and it is bad enough that in the year 1869 there should be a rag left of any such monstrous system.

The solicitors of Scotland, who number somewhere about fifteen hundred, have done a good deal for Mr Gladstone and Mr Bright. The great majority of them fought determinedly and well for them in the thickest of the late Parliamentary battle, and it is in a great measure owing to their perseverance and skill that the Liberal cause has triumphed as it has done in Scotland. It is for these gentlemen and their supporters now to mark their sense of this devotion by doing them justice, by seeing that they are placed upon the same footing as their brethren in England—that is, upon a footing of perfect equality. And if the first Parliament under the first Reform Bill did them a plain and manifest injustice, let it be one of the merits of the first Parliament after the second Reform Bill that it wiped away that injustice, as well as every other professional monopoly.

We have now only to notice the fourth and last, and lowest type of lawyer, to wit, that of Poind—the pettifogger—the black sheep of every profession. Upon him we certainly do not love to dwell. He is the loathsome beetle which crawls from under the leaves of the flower you were just in the act of going to smell—the slug that has lodged in the delicious fruit you were almost on the point of putting into your mouth—a creature all the more noticed and all the more disgusting from the beauty of the object his presence defiles, and which, but for him alone, you would have called perfection.

But have we, then, nothing to show except such types of a profession which makes so many claims upon our admiration and respect?

Yea, much. We know many provincial lawyers who would do honour to any bar—men who do not love literature the less, because they are obliged to cultivate law the more; who do not think that Jeffrey was an inferior lawyer because he was perhaps a greater critic, and who would not have scrupled to employ Talfourd before he had acquired legal renown, even had they known that he had written a tragedy—although he wisely delighted the attorneys with his law before he tried to win them with his verse. These are men who respect themselves in loving their profession, who would

scorn to go down to the Exchange at that hour when merchants most do congregate, to throw themselves in the way of some vulgar nabob desirable as a client; or to worm themselves into the difficulties of a railway, or the distresses of a trust. Men who won't cast about to see into what congregation of worshipping Christians they will switch the professional line; or, if they do take an interest in the affairs of any particular church, who will do it so as to be at the same time useful, and, if possible, unseen—who won't undergo the ordeal of standing in a cold doorway to receive and guard the oblations of ostentatious piety, in order the better to bait a hook with the worm hypocrisy, to secure a nibble, and nip when the gudgeons bite. Men who may almost be said to be free from the thousand and one littlenesses which the heart of man is not too small to contain. Men, besides, who will believe that you may be a reasonably good lawyer although you may not have written a dull commentary, and that, even were you to write a novel, you might be fairly ballasted with practical sagacity, although you never can hope to be so wise as some people look; who will not deem you frivolous, because you may choose to be sometimes sketchy or light, knowing that although the elephant can pick up sixpences he can also, when necessary, uproot a tree.

It has long been the fashion with some people to affect to look upon lawyers as individuals whose names are synonymous with trick and dishonesty. Now, keeping clear, as we hope everybody will, of the pettifogger and the quack, who form the hem of the garment of every profession in every country, which will necessarily bespatter part of the robe itself with the dirt in which it loves to draggle, we do most emphatically say, that the charge made against the profession of the law is neither more nor less than a calumny. For your modern Scribes and Pharisees at least, you must now go to the walks of life frequented by gentlemen of the Strahan, Paul, and Bate's school, and to other walks which we do not require to indicate here. We have not the slightest hesitation in saying, that there is as much honour and probity, as much generosity and disinterestedness in the profession of the law, whether it is practised in the capital or in the provinces, as in any profession or walk of life under the sun, not excepting, but, on the contrary, specially including that of the gospel itself; and this statement we make, not from an experience limited to the lawyers of these kingdoms, but from personal intercourse extending even to the Antipodes, and from a study of character ranging from a diagnosis of the astute Tom Tit, Esq., Dean of the Faculty of Procurators of the

important burgh of Pukeshaws, to Mons. Le Code of Toulouse, and Herr Gesetzbuch of Berlin, ay, even to the eminent Ta Ka Pekel Ti and Sambo of the bar of Wanganui in New Zealand. It will be difficult perhaps to believe that the last two individuals could, with perfect propriety, be called gentlemen, and that they possessed an amount of general learning and legal knowledge which would have done credit to any member of any bar at home. To be sure, they were not particular about things which we consider to be the proprieties of professional life here—that is to say, they wore beards and moustaches composed of hair or wool, as the case might be, and had an unprofessional habit of smoking black pipes before the door of the Supreme Court at Dunedin, dressed in wig and gown, in which they promenaded with stock-keepers, diggers, store-keepers, and others, in the open air, without having the least air of appearing to consider themselves superior mortal beings; but then the waves of the blue Pacific were rolling almost up to their feet, and although there was a stream called the Water of Leith running into it, the said stream did not look at all like the water of that name at home, nor did it remind you of the provincial conceit and snobbism which is said to dwell upon its banks. Sambo had been a pleader at the bar of one of our West Indian dependencies, formerly

belonging to the Dutch, and although he was a very hard smoker, and drank mighty draughts of bitter beer at the bars of various hotels, rejoicing in the names of "Criterion" and "Provincial," with individuals whom Mr Erskine Balfour Stair, of the Scottish bar, or perhaps in a lesser degree, his brother, Mr Edward Coke Lyttleton, of the Temple, would hesitate to associate with in tother Britain, he was not the less master of his *Corpus Juris Civilis*, and would have been a very formidable competitor for the chair of Civil Law in the University of Edinburgh, except for his black face and woolly hair. Nor was the said Ta Ka Pekel Ti less an earnest student of Scottish feudal law because he likewise smoked strong tobacco, and drank Colonial beer; for he thought it was a system—that is the feudal one—which would suit very well for a Maori kingdom, and therefore was it that he was curious to peruse and did peruse Craig's *Jus Feudale tribus libris comprehensum*, which we believe he got from an eminent official of the province of Otago, who, before leaving his native country—Scotland, had written a well-known book, which may be recognised under the title of "The Young Sheriff-substitute's and Procurator's *Vade Mecum* to the Sheriff Courts." Melancholy to relate, the eminent author dropped down suddenly, and died of apoplexy, supposed to have been brought on by reading in the

Scotsman that a certain learned Doctor of Laws at home had absorbed that book, stump and rump, thereby proving that every $\alphaὐθεντος φάγος$ is not necessarily a New Zealander. Nor was the said Ta Ka Pekel Ti less anxious, by various troublesome questions put to ourselves, to ascertain the precise state of modern sub-infeudation in Scotland, which he was endeavouring to understand from the lectures of the late Professor Menzies, which he also had among his books in his cottage in the scrub, and which questions we were fortunately able to answer, from having discharged the honourable and difficult task of assisting that learned professor in getting the said lectures up. We failed, however, to satisfy the New Zealander, or rather, we didn't wish to do so, with regard to the precise reason why our old nobility parted with the right of *furca et fossa*, which, in his eyes, was one which every aristocracy ought to possess. We found it convenient to say that the old nobility, for various good causes and considerations, moving them thereto, not requiring us to refer to nasty rebellions or heritable jurisdiction acts, (dangerous things to talk about in New Zealand,) were constrained to make over these rights, in the interests of the Crown, to a certain important executive official called the Earl of Calcraft. Should any descendant of the worthy Ta Ka Pekel Ti, on his annual holiday ex-

cursion to the lesser Britain, after he has completed his sketch of the ruins of St Paul's, and of the last arch of London bridge, venture farther north, and find these pages in exploring the tumps which mark the site of some "auld Kirk," we hope he will forgive us for having been so squeamish about the honour of our aristocracy—a feeling which he will be doubtless quite at a loss to understand. Long before then, if we can trust to prophets as sagacious as Macaulay, the old nobility will have become a thing of the past, after having succeeded in alienating itself from the affections of the people, and having duly earned the reward of popular contempt, by its unblushing patronage of the indecent twistings and turnings of fat and fluffy trulls from the *Opéra Comique*, by its admiration of *La Belle Hélène*, *La Périchole*, and *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*—its love of rowdyism in the streets—black-guardism in the casinos—scandal in the saloons of Rachel, and trickery on the turf, and—silliest and most fatal trick of all—by allowing itself to be slyly towed into Rome, after having made shipwreck of its honour, its virtue, and its religion, fastened to a priestly cable, one end being held by a leery friar, and the other being attached to a somewhat long and hopelessly stupid snout.

And now, before returning to the further outs and ins of the Veto case, and moved by a wailing cry of

distress which we hear even afar off from thy crowded lanes and streets, O, mighty London ! let us address a few words of warning and entreaty to you, the great aristocracy of England ; and, in saying England, let us be understood as meaning Scotland and Ireland as well. It is convenient to use it so, but, to satisfy our conscience, we do it under protest. We would have preferred that the words of warning came from a monitor with more chance of being heard, and, when heard, more likely to be listened to than ourselves. We daresay there are not a few who would feel it to be a duty to tell you the truth as they themselves perceive it ; but, on the other hand, there are many who are too much disposed to mix that truth with flattery. Honied words and honied medicine may be good for children—they are not good for men. Some people are afraid to tell things as they really are—we are not afraid. We happen to belong to a race—

Of caterans and robbers, did you say ?

Thank you. We admit it. They were caterans and robbers. Many of your ancestors, it is said, were robbers too. But what have the sons of these caterans done for you, the nobility of England ? They saved your honour and the fame of the British name at Fontenoy, and plucked a laurel from the brow of Saxe. For you they stormed the heights of

'Abra'm,' and quenched in blood the pride of Montcalm, and to you and to the rest of Europe they first taught that the Invincibles of Menou were not invincible at Alexandria. With one foot almost in the sea and the other on the beach, they drove back the legions of Soult from the ridges of Corunna, and cheered the dying Moore, as they bore him in their plaids from the bloody strife, with the hope, that in saving his ragged and starving soldiers, he had preserved the honour and glory of England. They stopped at Quatre Bras, the headlong rush of Ney, and were among those who conquered his master at Waterloo, and what they did then they are able, though not perhaps so willing now, to do again; for the heights of Alma, the "thin red line" of Balaclava, and the march on Lucknow, prove that the men of Campbell are still the men

" Of Wolf and Abercromby,
And Moore, and Wellington."

We say then, that we are of a race who fear not man, but God. We have nothing to fear, and but little to hope from man, and we—we have seen him in all his degrees and phases, from kings and nobles, to the murderer in his cell—on the scaffold, or chained as a convict at the back of the south wind—if it has a back. We

have seen him carried dead or wounded from the field of battle, or buried in the depths of the ocean. We have seen sons of the nobility of England, and of the nobility of France, and of other nobilities, priests, barristers, doctors, soldiers, sailors, statesmen, men of all countries, colours, and creeds, all jumbled together, striving more or less to earn their bread, as Adam did, by the sweat of their brow. We have been in the houses of the rich, and in the wigwam of the savage; but while we have little to hope from man, we have a great deal to hope *for* him; and it is because we have that hope, and because we believe that it is the chief duty of man here to leave, if he can, this world wiser and better than he found it, and so to be really a fellow-worker with his Creator; it is because we believe this, that we venture to address a few words of warning, and some words of entreaty, to you the old nobility of England. It is not necessary, before you take advantage of the storm signal, that you should be particular as to who it was who hoisted the drum.

We ask you then, this question—

“Is it, or is it not true, that in England, the rich are getting richer and richer, more selfish and more dissolute, while the poor are getting poorer and poorer?” We don’t want you to answer that question now. We will give you time to do it. It

requires time, and we hope you will give it consideration; but you may at least answer it thus far, by admitting that poverty, pauperism, and crime, are fearfully on the increase in the land of your forefathers.

Now, you may not unnaturally say, "Why do you appeal to us? We are rich and powerful, no doubt, but the mercantile and trading classes are many of them richer than we."

We answer, that we are not appealing to you merely for alms. We have appealed to you, as much as anything else, on your own account. We don't wish to see our aristocracy destroyed. We are of those who think that it is good for England to have an aristocracy. The mercantile classes though rich, are like the poor in this, that they are always with us. An aristocracy may be destroyed, but it cannot be created in a day, at least such an aristocracy as we used to believe we had in England. It is good for England to have an aristocracy—a chivalrous, a virtuous, a home-loving, and home-abiding aristocracy—just as it is good for her to have a National Church—a church following and enjoining the simple religion of the Bible—and as it will be good for her, and well for you, if she have a Protestant Church, and not a Ritualistic or a Romish Church; but it would be better far for England to have no aristocracy and no National Church, than to have

them corrupt, degraded, and alienated from the people.

How then, stands the case with you? It is said that you obtained your vast possessions, or a great part of them, by rapine and fraud, and that you are holding them in trust, for the gratification of selfish, sensual, and private ends, instead of for your own and the nation's welfare—that you have weaned the people from you, and wish to regard them as the Roman Senators did the *Plebs*—that you are destroying their morality by the premium which your vitiated tastes hold out to indecency and sensationalism on the stage, and to mummery and superstition in the church. It is said that while men are starving in East London and elsewhere in England—you are rolling about and lolling in carriages, emblazoned with armorial bearings, showing that some of you came here with the Conqueror, and that you are proud of that, and of your right to bear arms, proving that your ancestors succeeded very well in trimming the beard or polishing the boots of the great Bastard and his successors, or in cutting the throats of unfortunate Saxons, who were unreasonable enough to think that you could have done this trimming and brushing well enough in Normandy.

Well, what we would say to all that is this—that so far as origin is concerned, you are neither better

nor worse than the aristocracies of other countries, and that, should men again return to a primitive state, the same process would begin again. The old rule would immediately be put into practice, *quod nullius est fit occupantis*. It would, however, happen just as it happened before, that the strongest and most crafty—a preference being generally secured by the latter—would seize not only what was not occupied by anybody else, but all the occupied territory he could get hold of by conquest or chicane, and divide it among himself and his followers. Your ancestors—and our ancestors, although the latter didn't happen to be allowed to keep all that they possessed before Harlaw, or before they contracted the evil habit of burning churches, or we mightn't perhaps now be writing these lines—we say, your ancestors invested all the available means they had to invest, to wit, strong, brawny arms, and, perhaps, more than ordinary resolute wills and active brains, in the way most likely to yield them a good return, and on the battle-field or in the court they were rewarded by grants of land, and other grants and honours, for a life of danger, toil, and oftentimes of disease. Some were rewarded for victories won in the field of intellect, and some for meannesses and complaisance not necessary to be mentioned. It was a fair enough investment of capital, and, perhaps, the only one that

would have paid at the time. We do not dispute the return you received for it, and at this present time we do not know that anybody professes to question it, although there are certain people who do draw unfavourable inferences from that verse of the Proverbs which says—"An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed." On the other hand, some ingenious logician might say, and perhaps Mr Disraeli may yet have to say it, that even granting the ugly premises taken up by your opponents, you possess your rights upon as good a title as the merchant has to the wealth which he has acquired in commerce of a different kind; and, indeed, if the secrets of the counting-house parlour, of the private letter books, and private ledgers of the great merchants of the world, and their motives and acts, could be laid as bare as the deeds of your ancestors, we don't say what legitimate inferences might be made from such evidence as that; but all this is over, and away from the point which we have to consider now. There are some rights which are imprescriptible, but there is such a doctrine as prescription, for which, having been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, we have, upon the whole, a wholesome respect, although we don't carry it to the extent to which some people urge it, but to this, at least, it would seem to

be sufficient for you, that it validates titles, many of which, although not such as we think the best that might have been got when they were obtained, were certainly as good as most of those which were then considered to be so, and which, moreover, have had their irregularities sopited by time, if they were not all consecrated by morality.

But while thus recognising your rights of property, your status, and your honours, the further, and far more important question remains—What use are you making of them *now*?

This question may perhaps be considered an impertinence. We don't think it is. At least it is not intended to be so. We are of those who hold that as you obtained privileges at the expense of the nation, the nation has the right to see that you make a proper use of them. Your remote ancestors and some of their descendants may have continued their claims to possession of their rights by the sword—it may be by the pen, although the sword was the holding upon which they were given, and by which they were to be retained; but it never was intended merely to endow a race of drones—of simple annuitants in perpetuity—to erect a class distinct from, and having no sympathies or feelings in common with the mass of the people; yet a class living on the property, and battenning on the resources of the nation.

The class having been created, certain duties and responsibilities were created along with it.

Are you fulfilling these duties *now*? People ask whether it is enough in the present day, when all other classes of this great empire are obliged to strive with might and main to live, that you should merely live for yourselves—in ease, in idleness, in a round of giddy pleasures, in an eddy of fashionable dissipation—regardless of the wretchedness, the poverty, and crime which are welling up before and around you. They refuse to admit that you discharge your duty when you toddle down to the House of Lords, mumble there for an hour, and adjourn. Can you help the people asking themselves whether it is right that sheep, deer, and horses, dogs, partridges, pheasants, and grouse, gamekeepers, flunkeys, and footmen, should be laid up in ordinary, or, as some people say, in lavender, while hundreds of men are starving on pallets—pallets not always even of straw? Can you help them making reflections upon you for spending your money, and losing your reputation and fame on Schneiders—at the gaming tables of Baden or Homburg—fighting with *Cochers de place* on the streets, or cheating on the race course? Or, when you get sickened and emasculated by these things, will it be unreasonable for the people to refuse to believe that you have fulfilled your duties to your fellow-men,

or that you are making your peace with God by patronising candles and vestments, and being led away over to Rome?

You believe that there was a flood before the death of Noah. Have you forgotten that there was also a deluge after Mirabeau? The polished Marquis Scaramouche and La Belle Marquise Sacristine did, each of them in their way, all those pretty little things then. They, too, began to outgrow their civilization. They also delighted in the Schneiders, and in the nude Ballet girls and muscular dancers of those days; and they read and appreciated, we have no doubt, books similar to those which you seem to enjoy now—such as that worse than concentration of the indecencies of Boccaccio, *Les Contes de la Fontaine*—*Les Aventures du Chevalier de Faublas*, *Les Mémoires de Jacques Casanova de Seingalt*, and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*; and they had nice little chapels to worship in, and dapper little Abbés to flirt with, and wiry little Jesuits to confess to, and to show them the way, when it was ripe for it, to a nunnery or a convent. But there were nasty *lettres de cachet* and seignorial rights, you say, which weighed heavily on the people of France in those days. We know all that, and the less you say about some of these things the better; but what we would ask you about now is this, what good came of all

the little elegances of which we have been speaking, of all the selfishness, of all the gaiety, of all that dissoluteness and devoutness, for they seem always to go together? Did they stop the deluge or did they hasten it? We don't ask you to answer these questions at present; but at least think of them.

We have enjoyed a reign of unexampled peace and prosperity under Queen Victoria, surnamed THE GOOD, and whom may God long preserve to reign over us; but in the nature of things that reign can only last for a limited time. We do not know that we have any reason to suppose that that of her successor, whoever he or she may be, will be as happy, as virtuous, and as great. We don't say that it will not, but it is at least unusual in the life of nations to be blessed with so great a boon, and the time may not be far off when it may be well for the monarchy of England to be supported by a good, a patriotic, and a virtuous aristocracy. Should that time be to-morrow, are you prepared for it? Or are you making any preparations?

You are not, perhaps, aware of the extent to which what are called republican ideas are reacting upon these islands from America, Australia, and New Zealand. If not, you might do worse than take a trip to America, and visit our Colonies. The expense would be less and the pleasure more than in visiting

the *Salons* of Paris or the *Spielhaus* of Baden. But whether you will go to America or to Australia and New Zealand, or not,—or whether you will choose rather to go to the Continent, and to put on the cast-off papal rags of the Italians, Austrians, and Spaniards, be assured at least of this, that there is a current flowing from America and our Colonies as steady, ay, and as warm even as the Gulf Stream itself, and that it is washing away the foundations upon which you have chosen to build your house.

You don't see it, nor do you hear it ? We believe that. It makes no noise, but it is moving for all that. The tide makes no noise, but still it rises. You don't see it rise if you only drive along the Thames embankment.

Well, what of all that ? What of it, do you say ? Why, this—you have the power now to direct the course of that stream—to direct it for good. It is not necessary that England should become a republic. We do not think it desirable that she should. We would rather not see her a republic. Do you wish to make her so ? The people wanted you to settle the question of labour and the basis of national education. You chose, instead, to give them a Reform Bill. It might have been better, both for you and them, had you only given them what they asked ; but since you have given them a Reform Bill without first giving

them education, or seeing that they were placed in harmonious relations with their employers — two things not so very difficult to have done had you been earnest in trying to accomplish them—since, we say, you have given them this Reform Bill, and you must now give them the ballot, what are you going to do with yourselves? It was the boast of your leader that he had spent years on your education. Is it finished? If so, what are the fruits of his teaching? Above all, what has his teaching profited *you*? Did he tell you your real position, or does he really know it himself? Or has he been mixing syrup with the draught which he said it was good for you to swallow? We don't know, and, perhaps, you don't know yourselves, and although we have asked you the questions we don't want you to answer them, and you wouldn't, probably, answer them if you could.

But what we *will* ask you, and what the nation asks you, and expects you to answer, is this—Will you or will you not, educated for it or uneducated, fulfil the work you were intended to do, and which you are bound to perform in this country of England? Can you safely neglect it? Who would seriously have thought thirty or forty years ago that so venerable and important an institution as the Irish Church would be struck down, and its revenues

be appropriated, as we hope they will be, to secular purposes ?

Who would have dreamt of seriously proposing, although the nation was languishing for want of intellectual food, and is one of the least educated countries in Europe, that the revenues^s of Oxford should be confiscated for the most holy purpose of educating the people ?

Will it be deemed, think you, any very monstrous thing some forty or fifty years hence, or for aught we know sooner, to say that it is an unnatural and unjust thing that the people should be starving—elbowing one another over the cliffs of old England in a struggle for bread, while one man appropriates a whole county in walks for sheep and forests for deer? And if that man, besides, should happen to be living merely for himself and for his retinue of servants, dogs, horses, and carriages, and, even in the absence of anything worse, is only to be found taking an active interest in private chapels, blazing in the noon-tide of day with the light of candles, with the perfume of incense, and the glitter of vestments —do you think that a discontented people will require much rhetoric or logic to persuade them that an institution productive only of such results should follow the fate of the Irish Church, the revenues of Oxford, and, it may be, the Church of England itself?

Listen ! The men of East London—the brave manly sons of England, are starving for lack of bread. There's no work for them to do, or they wouldn't be starving. Nature's nobility is dying for want of sustenance. Have you no sympathy with it ? It was from the ranks of those men that many of your fathers were chosen to be senators. Yea, even from that very class whom you are said to despise. Think you that they are ignoble ? Do you think that they will be less noble than you when they go to that world where there is no old nobility—where there is no distinction of race or caste ? Do you believe that when Christ makes up his jewels he will do what you even don't do on earth—that he will choose his gems all of one colour, of one water, and from one stone ?

You are not bound to support them nor to find them work ? We didn't say you were bound by human laws to do it, although we are sorely tempted to say it. They die quietly, you tell us. They don't disturb you. It is only we who are saying disagreeable things. You want to be let alone, as you are preparing to go to Lady Greatjoy's ball. It is inconvenient. We are intruding.

Are you mocking ? Do you know what is said in the Book of Holy Writ—" Whoso mocketh the poor, reproacheth his Maker : and he that is glad at calamities, shall not be unpunished " ? Yes ; they

die. These brave English hearts know how to die. We have seen them die in foreign lands; but not of starvation, thank God! No, that is left for them to endure at home! They know how to die, those Englishmen; and knowing that they must, they make no fuss about it.

But at least they would die more mercifully if they could die quicker, and know, while dying, that their deaths would save the lives of their wives and little ones.

Listen again! Have you heard of that noble band of soldiers who formed line on the deck of the BIRKENHEAD, and, saluting their officers, with their eyes fronting the boats which contained their wives and children, went down out of sight for ever? They, too, were Englishmen, and they knew how to die, and were ready to go, for their eyes had seen the salvation of widows and orphans, whom they once used to call wives and children! They died very quietly, too. Theirs were thoughts too deep for tears, and their looks didn't need an interpreter. They made no noise. The only noise was the horrid swish and swirl of the waves when the sinking ship went down; but that noise—even that, was after the soldiers were gone! But the death of these brave men was quick, and it was also merciful; for they knew that their deaths had purchased the lives of

those whom they hold dearest on earth—dearer even than themselves.

Would you have saved those men if you could?

Yes, you would have tried to save them. And why would you have tried to do it? Is it because they were soldiers and were drawn up in line, and it is pretty to see soldiers in line, and it would be a pity to see them die so in the wide ocean, on board of a sinking transport?

Ah! NOBLESSE OF ENGLAND! there are men now in London, just as brave, just as helpless, sinking in as vast a gulf as those did who sank with the BIRKENHEAD! They are not in line, and they do not die quickly, and alas! they know that their deaths will not redeem the lives of their wives and children!

Will you not help them? Merciful God! is there no Lord Peabody among the serried ranks of England's nobility, who will rise and save those starving men? Do you not blush to think that a simple citizen of that great and good nation—yes, great and good—the people of America, whom, it is said you scorned, reviled, and insulted; and would fain have destroyed—do you not blush, we ask, to think that this simple good man—this true Samaritan, should be doing the duty incumbent upon you, of saving your poor from the jaws of famine?



What a satire upon vengeance! People of America! your triumph is complete!

Do not, we beseech you, let it be said of you, the descendants of England's chivalry and worth—"There is a generation whose teeth are as swords and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men." Do not be deceived by the smoothness and calm which seem to be existing around you. They were piping and dancing, marrying and giving in marriage before the flood. We are now in the midst of an atmosphere, which though still, is as oppressively charged with sulphureous elements as the most threatening thunder cloud. We are in the midst of plenty, though we are, alas! also in the midst of want. If troubles come, and come they will sooner or later, it will be well for you to see around you a happy, a moral, and a contented people. It would be better, too, perhaps, had you those around you—the thousands of that brave and devoted race, whom, for the sake of sheep and deer, you caused, most wrongfully, to be deported from the homes of their fathers. Even now, perhaps, the curse of that foul system has begun to cast its shadows before, by the very finding of gold in the lonely valleys of Sutherland! Who can unfold the mystery of retribution? Come, however,

it will, in some form, and at some time or other.

“National discontent,” says a writer, whom it is not fashionable to read, “seldom originates in trivial matters, nor is it easy to excite a people against an established government, even in cases of flagrant misrule, unless their natural attachment have been previously alienated by continued oppression or *neglect*. Revolutions, however sudden in appearance, are not in common the effects of sudden impulse—the immediate visible agents may be trifling, the shock unexpected, instantaneous, and universal, but there must have been in silent operation, a number of unnoticed, unheeded causes, which, in fact, produce them.” *

What has been destruction to dynasties and governments must, in the nature of things, be fatal also to you. You may succeed in demoralizing and Romanizing classes—you will never succeed in doing so with the nation. If the disgust of an old woman to an obnoxious prayer-book, gave shape and form to a revolution in Scotland, no man can tell how insignificant may be the instrument which may ring the knell of your power and influence, should you at length arouse the indignation and scorn of the people of England.

We shall plead no more. It has been our lot to

* Aikman’s Hist. of Scotland. Vol. 4; p. 1.

plead oftener than once, for those whose poverty compelled them to sue *in forma pauperis*. We hope we have done it now for the last time. We have pleaded for the brave, strong man, emaciated by want, and a prey to disease—for his tearless wife—for even the well of her tears is dry—for their famished, starving little ones. And we have also pleaded for and with you, O Nobility of England! We leave you now to your conscience and your God. But, in doing so, we would ask you again—

Is it, or is it not true, that in England the rich are becoming richer and richer, more selfish and more dissolute; the poor, poorer and poorer? and —— we dare not utter it. *Vicille Noblesse—BEWARE!*

C H A P T E R X X I.

A LAWYER'S LOVE LETTER—HOSTILITIES COMMENCE—OBJECTORS BEGIN THEIR EVIDENCE—WHAT WAS SAID BY THE REV. ALISTER M'CRINGER—HOW THE GOSPEL CAN EVADE THE LAW.

“SO you think your chances are doubtful with the fifteen thousand pounder?” said Mr Horn to his partner, Poind, one morning, after some talk about the further proceedings in the Veto case.

“I rather think so.”

“Try her with the letter at all events, as she did not refuse you liberty to write. Draw it up, and I'll revise it for you.”

“But how do you propose to get an introduction to the widow?” he asked, after a pause.

“That's just what I was thinking about.”

“Have you no idea on the subject?” again asked Horn.

“Well, I think it wouldn't do to get a merely formal introduction. It would look suspicious. If I could only throw myself first of all in her way.”

“I'll tell you what I would suggest, Poind. I know she's willing to feu part of the ground, and I am aware that she is not inclined to sell. I should

think the land worth perhaps fifty thousand pounds. Now, suppose I wrote a letter to her, signed by the firm, saying that a client of ours wished to purchase a property in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, at a price not exceeding forty thousand pounds, and ask whether she would take that sum for the property at Crossmungo ; or if not, how many acres she would be disposed to feu, and in what part of the estate ? Of course I would begin by saying, ‘ This letter will be delivered to you by our Mr Sharper Poind, who is going in your direction on other business, and as,’ &c. You see ? ”

“ The very thing,” said Poind, delighted.

“ And then, you know, you could say that if it would not be too much trouble you would like to see what part of the property she proposed to feu. It’s as likely as not that she would put on her bonnet and shawl and go along with you. She was a domestic servant at one time, and is not at all particular.”

“ But if she should show the letter to her agents, Law and Rule ? ”

“ Well, supposing she did, all they would do would be to write us an abusive letter about breach of professional etiquette—the usual thing you know.

“ If she should go out with you for the purpose of showing the grounds, you will of course make yourself as agreeable as possible—talk about the pressure of

business—that you were thinking of buying some nice place in the neighbourhood of the city yourself—but that she mustn’t suppose that the present matter is on your own account. You can do this in such a way as to lead her to believe that it is.”

Here, then, was an example of the saying that two heads are better than one. No introduction, under the special circumstances in which Poind was placed, could have been more ingeniously devised. What a handy thing is a firm! That which a man can’t say for himself the mighty “We” can say for him with ease. It’s an awkward thing to introduce one’s self. It’s the simplest thing in the world to—“& Co.” It’s a great institution is a firm!

“What sort of a looking fellow is your rival?” asked Horn.

“Hum—something like myself.”

“Well, in that case, I don’t think you’ve very much to fear,” observed Horn, with a malicious twinkle in his eye.

Poind tried to laugh, but his giggle was forced. He didn’t like to be thought plain looking. All men of his stamp, have a high opinion of their personal appearance. He overshot the mark, however, in comparing himself favourably with Sneaker. The latter was what is called “good looking,” or “genteel looking,” which Poind could not be said to be, and

Sneaker had, we will not say a fascinating, but certainly an attractive manner, to which he endeavoured to give an air of naturalness which he knew he did not really possess. The base coin, however, only deceived those who, not having studied human character, were unable to discern the ring of the true from the chink of the false metal. Hypocritical by nature, Sneaker could readily affect that kind of godliness which abounds in pious cant, manufactured sighs, and crocodile tears. Although comparatively young, he had the shrewdness and tact of many an older man, nor did he want ability of a certain kind. He was above the average as a preacher, and if he had possessed more heart, and could only have himself felt a portion of the truth which he recommended to others, he would, probably, have attained more than an ordinary reputation. But an inordinate desire for worldly advancement, a craving for sudden wealth, and a prominent position, choked whatever good seed had been sown in his heart, and made him, at the same time, a fortune hunter, a dissembler, and a fop.

Poind lost no time in taking his partner's advice, and drafted his proposed letter to Miss M'Phillabeg, which he got revised by a literary friend. It ran as follows :—

GLASGOW, —— 18 —

“ MY DEAR MISS M'PHILLABEG,

“ When I parted from you at the manse, I was in very low spirits, and you will forgive me for saying that you were the cause thereof. I thought I deserved rather different treatment at your hands than to have the offer of my arm, to conduct you to the supper room, declined, and to see a preference given to one who deserted your society for the company of a few revellers, who returned merely to proffer, for the sake of form, what I was impelled to offer from regard. I opened my mind to you that evening; and as you have not denied me the privilege of writing, I send this to assure you that I not only admire and respect, but love you with all the fervour of which I am capable.

I now offer you my hand and heart. Although I do not pretend to be a very rich man, I have sufficient means to warrant my marrying. I enjoy an income, derived from business, (which is daily increasing) of at least £1000 per annum. Any money of your own, as to which I know nothing, could be settled upon yourself and the children of the marriage. I intend to feu a piece of ground, in the neighbourhood of this city, on which to build a nice cottage. I do hope you will consent to share it.

“ I will require to be at Porterbier early next week to lead evidence for the Objectors, when I trust to have the pleasure of seeing you looking as charming as ever. Meantime, I am,

“ Yours devotedly,

“ SHARPER POIND.”

“ That'll do very well, Poind,” said Horn, when he had read over the letter. “ You've been drawing the long bow, though, about the thousand. However, the Veto case may probably bring you nearly up to it this year.”

"I wish I were a long *beau*," said Poind, laughing; "an objection to me, I believe, is that I'm too short."

"Well," said Horn, "I'm just going out of town, but here's the letter to the widow M'Creesh. You should lose no time in going out to see her. Success to you."

Poind did not neglect the advice of his worthy partner.—On arriving at Crossmungo, he was rather annoyed to find that the widow was from home. All that the servant could say was, that her mistress was "jist gaun aboot frae place tae place, tae see her freens," but, she added, "Mrs M'Creesh will expec' ye tae leave yer address. There's been naebody ca'ing sin' she gaed awa', beenna' yersel' an' the gentleman wha left this caird yestreen."

Turning his eye towards the hall table, he saw only one visiting card, but it was one bearing the name "Rev. Adam Pry Sneaker!"

"Aha! he's been here before me," muttered Poind,—"this is the way he takes to show his intention of not calling upon the aunt again, in case she should think that he wished her to change her will!—What a world!"

With this extremely moral reflection, he returned to the office to make the necessary preparations for leading evidence before the presbytery of Dunderhead, in the Veto case.

The fortnight previous to the date fixed for proceeding with the evidence, was a busy one in the parish of Veto. Warning notes of preparation were heard in both camps. Messengers went hither and thither. Missives, couched in English phraseology as destitute of idiomatic elegance as the Duke of Marlborough's French despatches, were sent to the more distant parts of the parish ; and various councils, portentous of coming strife, were held at the respective rendezvous of M'Huistan and M'Groggy. Alister Fillyerglass had returned from his cell in Dublin jail, to aid the objectors with increased zeal, since he had already suffered in the cause. Alister considered the treatment he had undergone sufficient to have roused feelings of vengeance even in the breast of an apostle. To think that such indignities should have been offered to an elder of the kirk ! The disgrace would stick to him for life. He could expect nothing else than to be pointed at as the man whose throat had been cut from ear to ear, and who had been thrown into Lochspelding ; or as having been tried and convicted of some heinous crime in Ireland, and having been pardoned only through the great influence of Messrs Puncheon, Sheepshanks, and others, with the Lord Lieutenant. Alister, therefore, worked with a will for the objectors.

The presentee's supporters showed equal activity.

They were far more numerous and enthusiastic than their opponents ; they felt that they had right on their side although not might, except indeed that of numbers, which, however, does not always avail when opposed by wealth and influence. They saw that they had nothing to expect from the presbytery but a subservient knuckling down to the higher classes, and they knew that they would knock at their door for justice in vain. They were determined, notwithstanding, to stick to the man whom they had called to be their pastor, and to sustain him against the oppressors who sought to drive him from a parish which it was now very well known they had destined for Sneaker. Accordingly, the forces of both parties were pretty well organized before being reviewed by those eminent commanders, Gabby Garrempey, and Sharper Poind. These legal celebrities made their appearance on the field a few days before actual hostilities commenced. Sneaker also showed face, as he was to be a witness for the objectors. Neither Garrempey nor Poind wasted time in unnecessary manœuvres. They went promptly into the different matters which were to form the subject of evidence. Sneaker was received as usual with confiding trust by the amiable Miss M'Corkscrew, and Poind thought he saw a hopeful change in the demeanour of Miss M'Phillabeg.

A meeting of the objectors was finally held at M'Groggy's to complete arrangements. It was attended by all the members of the conclave, and resolutions were come to in the midst of potations long and deep.

"I'm afraid," said Puncheon, "we must give up the idea of getting any evidence from Snuffmull. I have a letter from Mr Turnbolt, the fiscal, saying that notwithstanding all his exertions, and promises of good payment, he cannot get any one to come who would be of service. Such persons of respectability as he had seen, said they never heard anything about the presentee except what was to his credit, that it was an unholy work to oppose him, and that whoever went to give evidence against him, might as well stay away from the place altogether, afterwards. There were, he said, a few loose characters in the place, chiefly fishermen, who would do or say anything for money, and some of them came to him voluntarily expressing their willingness to go, but he could not think of sending them."

"What for no?" said Stirk. "That's name o' oor bizziness. If they gie evidence tae support oor objections, that's a' we hae tae dae wi' it."

"What do you say, Mr Poind?" said Sheepshanks, doubtfully.

"Well, I don't think there's any harm in sending

a couple of them here, and we can judge for ourselves whether they'll suit or not."

A letter was accordingly despatched to that effect.

The church of Veto was crowded on the day for beginning the objectors' evidence. Several enterprising vendors of refreshments had set up stalls and tents to accommodate the crowds who were sure to come to enjoy the expected fun. The presbytery again mustered in full force for the opening day, but the attendance fell off sadly before the wind-up.

The meeting was, as usual, opened with prayer by the Moderator, in the course of which he expressed a hope that their proceedings would be conducted in a spirit of charity and forbearance, that every feeling of ill-will, and every thought prompting to partiality, would be banished from their minds—that all their deliberations, and reasoning, would be directed to ascertain the truth, to do justice, by the light of reason, and the gospel. Pity that a prayer like this should have been offered up in vain! Many of the members of that rev. court who were supposed to be listening to it, were at the moment plotting how they could best reach some particular point, or over-reach another—how they could most effectually help forward the desires of the few, and frustrate the hopes of the many.

Prayer, we once heard a Yankee say, was a

great *institooshun*. It is wonderful to how many base uses it is applied ! When two hostile armies approach each other, after having, perhaps, devastated a country with fire and sword—driven innocent families from ruined homes, and committed other nameless atrocities, if is not unusual to find them, before engaging in the deadly strife, importuning Heaven for success ! Each of them is sanguine that the God of Battles will crown their standards, consecrated by rival priests, with a great and glorious victory. On the memorable field of Sadowa, both the Austrian and Prussian commanders invoked, with all the urgency of orthodox devotion, a blessing from on High upon the arms of their respective soldiers. What a spectacle ! A set of matchless robbers, who are preparing to shed each other's blood because they cannot agree about the spoliation of Denmark, go down upon their knees, in the expectation that Providence will suspend, in favour of the least iniquitous of two shameless plunderers, that law, which, according to the First Napoleon, gives victory to the strongest battalions ! The Mexican bandit of the *tierra caliente*, who lurks in some dark recess, with the amiable intention of cutting your throat and rifling your baggage, when he hears the rumbling of the approaching *Diligencia*, drops upon his knees, kisses his crucifix with energetic fer-

vour, mumbles a hasty prayer to the virgin of Guadalupe, hoping at the same time that she has gifted you with plenty of doubloons ! Is his prayer less blasphemous than was that of the Hapsburger or Brandenburger ?—Not a whit. Truly prayer is a good thing, but, like many other good things, it is sadly abused. Here we have the presbytery of Dunderhead joining in a prayer, asking to be endowed with charity and forbearance—to be able to do what was just and right in their deliberations and judgments. The prayer is no sooner ended, than the place of meeting—itself the house of prayer—is converted into a bear garden. The rev. presbyters worry each other and the counsel, like a pack of savage wolf-hounds, and commit acts of such monstrous, and frequently intentional injustice, “as make the angels weep.”

“*Victa jacet Pietas et virgo cæde madentes,
Ultima cœlestūm terras Astræa reliquit.*”

The first step taken was the production of the sermons, which being docqueted and signed by the moderator and clerk, were held of consent as forming part of the objectors' case—after which, they proceeded to examine their witnesses. We shall give the evidence exactly, as it is reduced to writing, the questions and answers being generally preceded by

the words "Interrogated" and "Depones."—We also give that part of the *res gestae*, which does not appear in evidence, but without which, the picture would not be complete.

EVIDENCE FOR THE OBJECTORS—

At VETO, and within the Parish Church there,
the —— day of —— 18—.

COMPEARED—The Rev. Alister M'Cringer, minister of the parish of Ochonochree, who, being solemnly sworn and interrogated,

Depones—I attended at the various diets fixed by the presbytery for the presentee preaching in the parish church of Veto, along with the other members of presbytery appointed for that purpose. I received the manuscripts of his sermons, which have now been produced.

Interrogated—What impression did the discourses make upon you?

Objected for the presentee—That it is utterly incompetent to make a party who is one of the judges in the case, a witness against the presentee. It will be impossible for the proposed witness afterwards to deliberate upon the case, if he is brought forward to give evidence now. He will pronounce judgment as a witness before he can give his opinion as a judge, after hearing the evidence for both parties.

Besides, he is not asked to speak to facts, but merely to impressions.

Answered — There is nothing incompetent in adducing Mr M'Cringer as a witness. He was present in the discharge of a duty imposed upon him by the presbytery, and there is no illegality in taking his evidence.

Mr M'Cringer—I maintain that it is quite competent to examine any member of presbytery.

Parties being removed, the presbytery, by a majority, repelled the objection.

Against which deliverance the agent for the absentee protested, and appealed to the ensuing meeting of the General Assembly, took instruments and craved extracts, which were allowed.

The agent for the objectors acquiesced.

And the question being repeated,

Depones—They appeared to me to be unconnected and hurried. He did not, in my opinion, elucidate his text; and both his psalms and texts seemed to be chosen with a view to wound the feelings of those who might oppose him. He opened his eyes several times during prayer. I did not think there was much unction about his prayers. His discourses were very dry, and, from my knowledge of the people of Veto, I didn't think they would profit much by them.

Interrogated—Did you observe anything peculiar about the presentee's manner?

Yes. He seemed to be reciting, and swung his arms about in a most ungainly manner. He spoke too loud, and, I think, his tongue is either too large or too small for his mouth. He did not speak in the broad open—

Mr Garrempey—“The Presbytery have already found this objection irrelevant.”

Moderator—“Certainly, we can't go back upon that.”

Interrogated—Was there anything else peculiar?

Yes. He had a large crop of red—

Mr Garrempey—“This has also been found to be irrelevant, and cannot form the subject of proof now.”

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—“But he has not yet cut it off.”

Mr Garrempey—“It will be time enough for him to do that when he gets into the parish.”

The Rev. Mr M'Sneovish—“But then perhaps he'll not do it.”

Rev. Mr Macintrowsers—“Couldna' we mak' it a condition o' his induction?”

Rev. Mr Sneckdraw—“Moderator, I beg to make the following motion:—‘That in respect the presentee hasna' cut off his hair, so as to obviate the objection, oor rev. brother should be alloooed to pro-

ceed tae state what he saw peculiar on the occasion in question, so that a record of it may be preserved.' We're not, of course, bound to give effect to the objection by doing this."

Rev. Mr M'Snee—"I second the motion."

• Rev. Dr Browser—"Moderater, I think the course proposed quite incompetent. You have already, by a solemn judgment, found this objection irrelevant, and you cannot now allow any evidence in support of it, without stultifying yourselves."

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"But that was because he was to cut off his hair."

Rev. Dr Browser—"I don't care what was the reason. We have given a final judgment upon the point, and I think, sir, as you are in the position of a witness, you should take no part in this discussion."

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"That does not take away my right as a member of this Presbytery."

Rev. Dr Browser—"Perhaps not; but it certainly ought to take away from the value of your evidence."

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"What do you mean by that?"

Rev. Dr Browser—"I mean what I say.—I beg to move, Moderator, as an amendment, that no evidence be allowed upon this point."

Rev. Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"I second the amendment."

Parties being removed, the Presbytery, after reasoning, by a majority allowed the evidence to be received, which judgment was dissented from, protested against, appealed, and acquiesced in, *ut supra*, and the question being repeated,

Depones—He has a large crop of red hair, and a bad squint, so that, as I heard a party at my back say, he seemed to be looking two ways for Sunday.

Was there anything else peculiar?

Yes; his nose was too small, in my opinion, for the size of his face. He blew it frequently in a way which alarmed several females near me.

Interrogated—Do you consider that these peculiarities had a distracting effect upon the congregation, and prevented them from benefiting by the presentee's services?

I do most decidedly. I saw people laughing, and several people asleep.

Interrogated—To what do you attribute these results?

Depones—I attribute the laughing to the peculiarity of the presentee's appearance, and the sleeping to the squint. How it precisely affects those who keep their eyes fixed on it I do not pretend to explain.

Interrogated—Can you give any instance of this?

Yes; there were several old women sent asleep.

Their breathing was quick and stertorous, and it was with considerable difficulty that they could be awakened.

Interrogated—Are you aware that the presentee, instead of residing in private lodgings, lives in a common inn, in Porterbier ?

Here Huistan rose in great wrath, and exclaimed—“A'll hae ye tae know, Mr Poind, that ma hoose isna a common inns, an' if ye don't tak care a'll maybe mak' ye rue yer expressions.”

Poind got rather alarmed. He remembered the fate of Quaighorn and Rory M'Stitcher, and as he had occasion to be frequently within Huistan's clutches in the village, he didn't want to make him more of an enemy than he could help, so he said blandly—

“I don't mean any disrespect to your house, Mr M'Huistan, but the phrase ‘common inn’ is a legal term, applicable to all inns, and it is only in that sense I'm using it. I believe your inn to be as well conducted as any house can be.”

Huistan sat down with a look of great satisfaction, and the examination proceeded.

Depones—I believe he resides in Mr M'Huistan's inn, and I may add that he could not be in a more respectable one.

A grim smile from Huistan, and a whisper

to Garrempey, "He thinks he'll butter me up. He's tried that afore, but a'm dune wi' him noo."

Interrogated—Are you acquainted with the Parish of Veto?

Depones—Perfectly. It's very hilly and rugged, the roads are bad, and very steep, and it is intersected with morasses, water-courses, and dykes. It's very difficult to traverse.

Interrogated—Are you aware that the presentee halts in walking; in short, that he has a short leg and a shorter?

Depones—I am.

Interrogated—Do you think he is fit to traverse this parish if he had to go off the main or parish road to visit the people?

Depones—I do not.

Interrogated—Does the parish require the services of a young, vigorous, and energetic minister?

Depones—It does.

Interrogated—Do you consider the presentee to be such, from what you have seen of him?

Depones—I do not.

Interrogated—Has he a wife and family?

Depones—I believe he has.

Interrogated—Is he or is he not acceptable to the parties who have signed the objections, or to the parish generally?

Depones—He is not.

CROSS-EXAMINED for the presentee.

How long have you been a minister in your present parish ?

Depones—For about fifteen years.

In what year did you get your presentation ?

Depones—I think it would be in 1843.

Mr Garrempey—The year of the Disruption ?

Yes.

Interrogated—Had you any church before then ?

Depones—No.

Interrogated—What were you doing at that time ?

I decline to answer. I don't think you have any right to ask me these questions.

Mr Garrempey—Very well. If you decline, it is all the same to me.

Were you then a tutor in the family of Mr Puncheon, and was it through his and his friends' influence that you got the parish of Ochonochree ?

I decline to answer these questions. I consider them to be irrelevant, and impertinent, and I shall move the presbytery to refuse to allow any more of them to be put down in the record.

Now, Mr M'Cringer, said Garrempey, speaking in a very decided and earnest tone, Mark what I say. Should you attempt to do any such thing, and should the presbytery be so inconsiderate as to be led

away by you, ~~I~~ shall, at the proper time, you may depend upon it, call in the aid of a court that will compel you and them to do justice, and make your pockets suffer for what your consciences do not seem to feel.

"Oh, ho ! he threatens us with the Court of Session !" roared out M'Sneevish. "We cannot allow an agent to appear here who uses such threats."

"Do you refuse, then, to allow me to appear?" said Garrempey, coolly. "Say the word—Yes or No ! The steamer starts to-day at three o'clock, and it will suit me very well to get back to Edinburgh."

There was no answer. The rev. court could bully as long as its members thought that bullying would do, but when they began to reflect that their proceedings would probably be quashed, and that they might have to pay the piper in the shape of law expenses, a change came over the spirit of their dream.

Moderator—"I think you had better go on, Mr Garrempey. Mr M'Cringer may decline to answer your questions, but as an inferior court, we are bound to record them if not clearly incompetent. The Synod or Assembly may take a different view from us."

The examination being resumed, and the witness being interrogated—

Are you in the habit of living at the houses of

Mr Puncheon, Mr Sheepshanks, or Mr Stirk, when you come to this parish, and have you done so during the times you have been here, since the case commenced ?

Depones—I decline to answer.

Interrogated—Were the objections against the presentee drawn up by you, or did you assist in any way in their preparation ?

Depones—They were not.

Mr Garrempey—You have not answered the latter part of the question.

Depones—I may have mentioned to some parties what I thought objectionable, but further than that I had nothing to do with their preparation.

Interrogated—Who were these parties ?

Depones—I don't recollect.

Interrogated—Were they Messrs Puncheon & Co. ?

Depones—I don't know what is meant by Puncheon & Co.

Mr Garrempey—You don't.—Well, Messrs Puncheon, Sheepshanks, Porter, and Stirk ?

Depones—It is possible I may have spoken to them about the objections.

Interrogated—Will you swear that you did not go over the objections with these parties or any of them, and make suggestions before the objections were lodged ?

Depones—I don't think I did anything of the kind. I may have heard them read, but that would be all.

Interrogated—When was that, and who were present?

Depones—I don't recollect.

Interrogated—Did the presentee give you the manuscripts of his sermons?

Depones—He did.

Interrogated—Did you immediately hand these documents to the Presbytery clerk?

Depones—No.

Interrogated—Did you retain them for a couple of weeks?

Depones—I'm not exactly sure as to the time.

Interrogated—You retained them, however, for some time?

Depones—I don't think I kept them very long.

Rev. Mr Skirleywhitter—"I did not receive them for upwards of two weeks after they were delivered to you, and the packet had been opened by somebody before it came into my hands."

It may be here mentioned, that the clerk had felt his dignity hurt by M'Cringer's conduct in this matter.

Mr Garrempey—Now, Mr M'Cringer, I ask you upon your oath, whether you did not hand the pre-

sentee's sermons to some of the principal objectors, to enable them to get up their case?

Depones—I did not hand the presentee's sermons to any of the objectors.

Interrogated—Could any person have got access to them for that purpose?

Depones—I can't tell.

Interrogated—Had you them with you when you were living in any of the objectors' houses?

Depones—I may have had.

Interrogated—Is it possible that any of your papers might be lying in your bed-room, or in any open place where access could be had to them?

Depones—It is quite possible.

Interrogated—And you will not swear that some person may not have had access to them in such circumstances?

Depones—I will not.

Interrogated—Did you invite the presentee to preach for you about a month or six weeks ago?

Depones—Yes.

Did he ask you to allow him to preach?

Depones—No.

Interrogated—Were you acquainted with the presentee?

Depones—No. I never saw him before he preached his trial discourses.

Interrogated—He had no introduction to you?

Depones—No.

Interrogated—What was your object in asking him to preach for you?

Depones—I heard that he was anxious to have an opportunity of making himself known through the country.

Interrogated—Who told you that?

Depones—I don't remember.

Mr Garrempey—Just so; you wished to do him a kindness. Well then. Did you say that you were to preach for the Rev. Dr Brower?

M'Cringer here looked rather confused, and was staggered for a moment, but he rallied very quickly, and said—

I don't think I could have said any such thing. Dr Brower's name may have been mentioned in conversation, as a member of presbytery; but I hardly think I could have said I was to preach for him.

Huistan—"But you did say it, sir; an' a'll prove it."

"Seelence, there!" roared out Donald M'Wheesht, the beadle.

Rev. Dr Brower—"Mr M'Cringer never preached for me in his life; and I never asked him."

Interrogated—Will you swear, that you did not say that you were asked to preach for Dr Brower?

Depones—It may be that I said that I was thinking of asking the doctor to preach for me; but I don't think I could have said that he asked me to preach for him. There must be a misunderstanding about it.

Interrogated—You will not swear that you did not say that the doctor asked you to preach for him?

Depones—I have no other answer to give than what I have given already.

Mr Garrempey—Very well, sir, we shall prove it otherwise.

Interrogated—Are you aware that the presentee walked from Porterbier to your manse.

Depones—I know that he arrived there on a Saturday; but I don't know that he walked.

Interrogated—What is the distance from Porterbier to your manse?

Depones—About fifteen miles.

Interrogated—Do you know that he walked back again on the Sunday?

Depones—He left me at the church to go back. I don't know that he walked all the way.

Interrogated—Did you ask him to take a walk with you over your parish?

Depones—Yes.

You went over some rough and hilly ground?

Depones—Well, it was not very rough.

Interrogated—Did you not find that he walked as well as yourself?

Depones—I saw that he had a halt, and I thought he seemed fatigued.

Mr Garrempey—Now, sir, answer my question. Did he not walk quite as briskly and as well as yourself?

I don't think so.

Interrogated—Did he not leap over a broad ditch which happened to be in your way, and which you were obliged to go round yourself?

Depones—He jumped over a small rivulet that a boy could have leaped over. I could have done it myself, but the ground was soft and muddy on the other side.

Interrogated—You say that you think that the presentee has a short leg and a shorter?

Depones—Yes.

Interrogated—What opportunity had you of observing this?

Depones—I had an opportunity of observing the length of the legs at family worship.

Interrogated—in what way?

Depones—His back was turned to me.

Mr Garrempey—I suppose you placed your chair at his back?

It was the only chair I could get.

Interrogated—Did you place it in that position for the purpose of getting a good look at the legs ?

Depones—No.

Mr Garrempey—Then I suppose it happened accidentally ?

It was accidental so far as I was concerned.

Interrogated—Do you think it was a proper thing for you to allow your eyes and thoughts to wander in the direction of the presentee's legs, instead of engaging in the solemn service of prayer ?

Depones—I did not say that I allowed my thoughts or eyes to wander.

Interrogated—Had you two of your elders in waiting when the presentee arrived ?

Depones—There were two of my elders with me when he and Mr M'Huistan came.

Interrogated—What were they there for ?

Depones—They came to see whether they would require to attend the meeting of presbytery.

Interrogated—Did you not invite the presentee to your manse, a man you did not know, for the purpose of testing his powers of walking, and with a view to ascertain the length of his legs, and this in concert, and by arrangement with the objectors ?

Depones—I did not.

Interrogated—Are you aware that the call is signed by five hundred parishioners ?

Depones—The call will speak for itself.

Being shown the call, and the question being repeated,

Depones—I think there are five hundred names to it, but they are not all communicants.

Interrogated—Is that call signed by two hundred and fifty communicants?

Depones—I cannot tell until it is analyzed. The objections are subscribed by the respectable and intelligent members of the congregation. The others I don't think are judges of what a minister ought to be.

Mr Garrempey—I am not asking you about the objections. Moderator, I have no further questions to put to this witness.

RE-EXAMINED for the objectors—I have no ill-will to the presentee, and shall be glad if the objectors come to think that he is a fit and proper person to be their pastor. All which is truth, as I shall answer to God.

(Signed) A. M'CRINGER.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

C H A P T E R X X I I .

OBJECTORS CONTINUE THEIR EVIDENCE—DISCOVERY OF THE
“YOUNG, VIGOROUS, AND ENERGETIC MINISTER”—CONSE-
QUENCES THEREOF—A YOUNG LADY VOLUNTEERS TO GIVE
TESTIMONY—INTERESTING DETAILS OF HER EXAMINATION—
CLOSE OF THE OBJECTORS’ EVIDENCE.

“WELL, Mr Ochtertyre,” said Garrempey, next morning, previous to the meeting of presbytery, “I’ve just learned that the next witness is to be the Rev. Mr Sneaker.”

“Indeed ; and I have just received a summons to attend as a witness to-day for the objectors, at one o’clock.”

“Have they really cited you ?”

“They have.”

“Well, you of course know what to say.”

“I have nothing but the truth to state, whatever comes out of it.”

“I never saw any man walk round about the truth in the style M’Cringer did yesterday,” observed Garrempey ; “but I think we’ll trap him yet. I suppose we can expect nothing better from Mr Sneaker ? There’s no doubt, I fancy, that

he's the young, vigorous, and energetic minister, who seems to be so urgently required to supply certain wants in this parish?"

"There's nae doot aboot that, Mr Garrempey," said Huistan.

"We'll have great difficulty, however, in getting anything out of him about himself, for the majority of the presbytery seem determined to keep us from proving anything which has a tendency to expose the conduct of the objectors. It's the most iniquitous court under heaven!" continued Garrempey, warmly. "I would infinitely prefer to be tried by a court-martial, composed of the most select martinets of the British army, or, in fact, by a jury of coal-heavers; for, in the former case one would at least be in the hands of gentlemen, and in the latter, of men whose minds would be free from bigotry and intolerance. God help the man who's to be tried by a presbytery, or indeed by any court of the church, say I! I think, however," he added, with a shake of his head, "I'll give them a fright to-day."

After delivering himself of these decided sentiments, Garrempey and his friends followed the crowd which now began to flock into the place of meeting. After the usual stereotyped prayer, the proceedings began.

AT VETO, and within the Parish Church
there, the _____ day of _____, 18____.

COMPEARED—The Rev. Adam Pry Sneaker, who,
being solemnly sworn and examined,

Depones—I am a licentiate of the Church of Scotland, and reside in Glasgow. I attended all the trial discourses of the presentee. He preached on two Sabbath days and one week day. I attended the Gaelic services as well as the English. I took notes, which I have with me. I jotted down the texts, and some of the psalms and paraphrases sung. The text of the first Gaelic sermon was Psalms lxix. 14. The text of the English sermon was Romans xii. 13 ; and the verses from the 5th to the 10th of the cxii. psalm were sung. The text of the Gaelic sermon on the second Sunday was Col. iii. 25 ; and the verses from the 9th to the 12th of the lxvii. paraphrase were given out to be sung. The text of the English sermon was Acts v. 41 ; and three verses of the lxv. paraphrase, viz., from the 5th to the 8th, were given out. On the week day the text of the Gaelic sermon was Luke iii. 8. I have no note of the psalms. His text in English was Psalms lxxxi. 11.

Interrogated—What impression did the services make upon your mind ?

Depones—He did not elucidate his texts. There was a total want of connection ; and his manner was

hurried, abrupt, and monotonous. There was a want of fervour ; and he failed to awaken devotional feelings in my mind. His prayers wanted unction very badly.

Interrogated—Did he open his eyes during prayer ?

Depones—He did.

Do you think his ministrations fitted to edify the people of Veto ?

Objected—This is mere matter of opinion. The witness can only speak for himself.

Answered—The witness is in the position of a man of skill, being a clergyman, and can therefore give an opinion from what he heard.

The presbytery, after reasoning, repel the objection, which deliverance was protested, appealed and acquiesced in *ut supra*.

And the question being repeated,

Depones—I do not think his ministrations fitted to edify the people of this parish.

Interrogated—Was there anything peculiar in his appearance?

Depones—He had a very formidable head of red hair, a bad squint, and I remarked that he had a particularly small nose.

Interrogated—Do you think it is in proportion to the rest of his face ?

Depones—Decidedly not.

Interrogated—Did you observe that these peculiarities attracted the attention of the congregation, and prevented them from listening in a proper frame of mind to the services?

Depones—I did. I saw several people laughing, and some parties asleep.

And you attribute these circumstances to the presentee's mode of preaching, and to his peculiar appearance?

Depones—I do. And I may add that there was considerable difficulty in getting some old women wakened. They said it was the minister that caused them to fall asleep.

Interrogated—Are you aware that the parish of Veto is very rugged and hilly, and that the roads are bad and steep?

Depones—I am.

Interrogated—Do you consider that the presentee is able to traverse the parish in the way of house to house visitation?

Depones—I do not.

Is it your opinion that for such a parish a younger and more vigorous man is required?

Depones—That is my decided opinion.

CROSS-INTERROGATED for the presentee—How old are you?

Depones—I decline to answer personal questions.

Interrogated—How long is it since you came to this parish ?

Depones—About six months ago.

Is Mrs Pry, the post-mistress, your aunt ?

Depones—Yes.

Interrogated—Have been here for weeks at a time ?

Depones—Yes.

Interrogated—For what purpose were you staying here so long ?

Depones—I decline to answer.

Was it to enjoy the society of your aunt ?

Depones—Of course.

Interrogated—During your stay here have you lived in your aunt's house ?

Depones—No.

You have lived in the manse ?

Yes.

Interrogated — Were you living in the parish during the whole period over which the presentee's discourses extended ?

Depones—No. I was part of the time in Glasgow.

But you made it a point to be here when he was to preach ?

I did not make a point of it.

But you were always here up to time ?

I happened to be here.

You knew the various diets appointed for the presentee to preach?

I daresay I did.

Interrogated—How did you come to take such an interest in the matter as to induce you to attend at the presentee's services, and to take notes?

Oh!—(Sneaker rather confused)—just out of mere curiosity.

Interrogated—Were you accompanied by any person on these occasions?

Depones—Yes; by several.

By any ladies?

Yes,

You know Miss M'Corkscrew?

I do, replied Sneaker, getting still more confused.

She is the daughter of the late incumbent?

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"Moderator—I really think this line of examination has lasted long enough. The agent is going into matters with which we have nothing to do, and he must be stopped."

Mr Garrempey—"Moderator—I wish, once and for all, and very respectfully, to state to this reverend court that I will not submit to have my client's case burked by Mr M'Cringer or any one else. I am entitled to the fullest inquiry, to show how the ob-

jections arose—that they have been got up from causeless prejudice, or, perhaps, from something worse. I may state, and I do so without the least desire to intimidate the court, that in view of any such attempt on the part of the presbytery, I wrote to Edinburgh for a notary public to come here, whom I expect to-day. I have further to state that should Mr M'Cringer, or any other member of court, persist in the course now attempted to be pursued, I shall take a notarial protest, and then leave you to deal with the case as you may think proper. If the individual members of presbytery are prepared to sanction what I must call the illegal and unjustifiable course contemplated by Mr M'Cringer, and to take the risk of the proceedings which shall certainly follow my protest, then my client will look to them conjointly and severally to indemnify him for all loss and damage which he may suffer in consequence."

This intimation, conveyed in calm and temperate language, received additional weight from the appearance of Mr Vellum Brown, notary public, who had just arrived by the steamer. The Moderator became rather alarmed, as did also several other members of court. They had a holy horror of the Court of Session, as well they might, for some of them had received practical proof of its power on a

former occasion. M'Cringer was, however, hounded on by Mr Puncheon and his friends.

"Don't give in to this bullying," said Sheepshanks. "We'll all stand between you and the Court of Session."

"Yes, we will," said Stirk and Puncheon.

"But I'm not very sure," observed M'Cringer, secretly alarmed for himself, "that the presbytery will support me. In fact, I think they will not."

"Try it at all events," said Sheepshanks. "It will never do to allow that fellow Garrempey to rake up all these matters."

"Well, I'll see," replied M'Cringer.

Moderator—"Do you insist upon your motion, Mr M'Cringer?"

"Yes," said the latter, with considerable hesitation.

His brethren had not been unwatchful of the colloquy which we have just described, and they saw that their leader was insisting merely out of deference to the cabal.

Moderator—"I may say that I don't think you should press this motion, Mr M'Cringer; but of course if it's seconded it must be disposed of. Does any member second it?"

Nobody spoke.

Moderator—"Then the motion falls to the ground."

Miss M'Corkscrew is the daughter of the late incumbent.

Did you escort her to church on all the occasions you have mentioned ?

Depones—She came along with the rest of us.

Interrogated — Had she your arm on these occasions ?

Sneaker was observed to look imploringly at the Rev. Mr M'Cringer, but there was no sign of assistance. At last he gulped out—

She had.

Considerable tittering among the audience.

Interrogated—Was Miss M'Corkscrew one of the parties who was laughing ?

Depones—Well, I believe she was.

Interrogated—Were you laughing yourself ?

Depones—I may have smiled. I don't think I was laughing.

Interrogated—You say that the services failed to excite devotional feelings in your breast. Do you require any extraneous aid to excite devotion ?

Depones—No.

Was the circumstance that you were in the house of prayer, and joining in the services, not enough, without anything else, to create devotional feelings ?

Well, I should think so, but the presentee's services were not calculated to do it.

You think it is necessary that there should be a young, vigorous, and energetic minister in the parish?

Depones—I do.

Do you consider yourself a young, vigorous, and energetic minister?

Depones—Yes.

How young do you think the minister should be?

Depones—I really don't know.

As young as yourself?

Depones—I can't answer that question.

Mr Garrempey—"Moderator, I don't want to put any questions to Mr Sneaker as to the discourses, as they are produced, and will speak for themselves. We shall have them criticised probably by other than divinity students fresh from the hall. I have no more questions."

RE-EXAMINED for the objectors—I went without any prejudice against the presentee to hear him preach, and I gave him a fair hearing. I have no *animus* against him. All which is truth.

(Signed) A. P. SNEAKER.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

Mr Poind—"Moderator, I now propose to examine the presentee." (Sensation in the court.)

It appears that two men had been sent from Snuffmull to give evidence, but Poind, on seeing them, and learning what they could say, thought that they would do more harm than good, and had resolved to make the presentee himself a witness.

Moderator—"It is surely unusual to examine a presentee?"

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"Oh! no. It has been done in one or two cases recently."

Mr Ochtertyre—"Moderator, I think it's a very inquisitorial proceeding; but I have no objections to be examined if the presbytery allow it."

The objectors fancied they saw a disposition on the part of the court to dispense with the examination of the presentee, and Sheepshanks accordingly drew M'Cringer aside, and said, in an emphatic voice,

"It must be done!"

Poind accordingly said, "Moderator, it is perfectly competent by the law of Scotland to examine all parties to a cause—"

Mr Garrempey—"You needn't argue the point, Mr Poind. We offer no objection."

The proceedings being resumed,

COMPEARED — The Rev. Fergus Ochtertyre,

minister of the parish of Lochspelding, who, being solemnly sworn and interrogated,

Depones—I have been minister of my present parish for ten years.

Interrogated—Do you sometimes reside out of your parish?

Depones—I was obliged about a year ago to take a house in Ochtertory on account of my wife's health and for the education of my children. I go to see them for a few days occasionally; but that's all.

Interrogated—Are you lame in one of your legs?

Depones—I have a slight halt, but so slight that very few people notice it. I have no pain, and I can walk as far as ever I did. I got my ankle injured when a boy, and I have had a slight halt since.

Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"Not a case of *ankylosis* I hope, Mr Ochtertyre?"

"Oh! not at all; that would be rather serious. My leg is sound enough; for that matter I can show it to you, or to any surgeon you may appoint."

Rev. Dr Brower—"There's no occasion for that. We have heard a good deal about noses and squints. We don't want any further evidence of a nosological description."

Interrogated—Have you been living at an inn since you came here?

Depones—I have.

Have you been using influence among the people to get them to sign your call?

Depones—I have not.

Interrogated—Have other people done so?

Depones—I am not responsible for other people. They may or may not have done so.

Have you any defect in your organs of utterance?

Depones—None whatever.

CROSS-EXAMINED—Since you came here were you asked by the Rev. Mr M'Cringer to preach for him?

Depones—I was.

What did he say to you?

He told me that the Rev. Dr Browser had asked him to preach in his church.

Are you quite sure of that?

Perfectly.

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"I deny that I used those words."

Interrogated—Did you know anything of Mr M'Cringer previously?

Depones—Nothing whatever, except that he was a member of presbytery.

Interrogated—Did you accept his invitation?

Depones—I did. I went to his manse on a Saturday along with Mr M'Huistan and his man, Donald. The former had been asked to dinner on that day. They had some bargain to settle about sheep.

How did you go?

We walked. The distance is upwards of fifteen miles. We walked over the hills the most of the way.

Were you tired?

Not at all. I could have walked as far again.

Did you afterwards walk out with Mr M'Cringer?

Depones—Yes. He took me over some very rough, hilly ground in the rain, for some three or four miles.

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"I deny that it was rough or hilly."

Rev. Mr Ochtertyre—"Your man knows it, sir; and you know it right well."

Interrogated—On your way back did you come to a broad ditch?

Depones—Yes; it would be about thirteen feet wide.

Did you leap over it?

I did; but Mr M'Cringer went round about a considerable way to avoid it.

Did anybody see you take the leap except Mr M'Cringer?

Depones—His man was on the road at some little distance with the gig.

Did you walk back next day to Porterbier?

Depones—I did.

Interrogated—Are you accustomed to walk in your own parish?

Depones—I am; and it is much more hilly and steep than any hereabouts.

You staid in the manse over Saturday?

Depones—I did.

Did you observe anything peculiar in Mr M'Clinger's conduct?

Depones—Yes. I saw that he was particularly anxious to get hold of my trowsers.

Rev. Mr M'Clinger—"It's quite erroneous."

Rev. Mr Ochtertyre—"There's nothing erroneous about it. I had been warned that your object in asking me was to test my powers of walking, and to ascertain about what you called my 'game leg.' You tried hard to get my trowsers sent down stairs, but you didn't succeed." (Roars of laughter—amidst which M'Clinger sat down.)

Mr Garrempey—"I have no more questions."

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—"Are ye willin' tae tak' aff yer hair?"

Rev. Dr Browser—"You have no right, sir, to take off anybody."

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers, referring, doubtless, to the doctor's song—"I jist wish ye had minded that yersel', sir, and wad let ither folk abee."

Mr Poind—"I have no further questions."

All which is the truth.

(Signed) F. OCHTERTYRE.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

The object of bringing forward M'Cringer and Sneaker at the outset of the evidence was plain. It was done to give the cue to those who were to follow. They were all present in the church, and heard the whole evidence. The difficulty now was to determine as to the further procedure to be followed. It was clear that the presbytery had been considerably shaken by the threats of legal proceedings, and that the objectors could not calculate upon all disagreeable questions being stopped. Poind thought it would be well to ascertain what line the presentee would adopt in his cross-examination with one of the objectors who did not know too much about what had been secretly done in getting up the opposition. Miss M'Corkscrew, therefore, with the devotion of a woman to her lover, and to her own relatives, volunteered to stand the fire of Garrempey's cross-questions for the sake of both. She was accordingly put forward as the next witness.

COMPEARED—Miss Flora Letitia M'Corkscrew, residing in the manse of Veto, who, being solemnly sworn and examined,

Depones—I was present in the Parish Church when the presentee delivered his trial discourses.

Interrogated—What impression did the services make upon your mind ?

Depones—I was disgusted with them. There was no connection in the sermons. His texts were, in some cases chosen, and his psalms were selected, to be sung with a view, in my opinion, to irritate those who intended to oppose him. I took notes, and I can state all his texts. His first Gaelic text seemed to be aimed at our family. It was “Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink. Let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.” His prayers were without fervour or unction, and he opened his eyes. He squinted a horrible squint, and roared rather than spoke. He made such a snort that I could not catch a word he said.

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—A case of *Vox et praeterea nihil?*

Witness—What's that ?

You mean that it was a mere sound, and nothing more ?

Just so. He is very plain looking, and—

"Has a wife and family!" said some one in the gallery.

"Seelence, in the coort, or a'll pit ye a' oot!" exclaimed Donald, the beadle, who had been keeping himself, as he said, "a' correc."

Interrogated — Was his manner hurried and abrupt?

Depones—Very. It took a strong effort to follow him, and even when you succeeded, you got very little for your pains. He jumped from one idea to another —there was no coherency in his discourses, and he did not elucidate his texts in the least. His services caused no devotional feelings in my mind.

Interrogated—Is there anything peculiar about his appearance?

Depones—Yes. He has a very large head, covered with an immense crop of the reddest and roughest hair I ever saw in my life, and his nose is, in my opinion, ludicrously small for the size of his face. His manner was altogether so *outré* that several people were laughing.

Interrogated—Are you aware that a number of people fell asleep during the sermons?

Depones—Yes. They were awoke with great difficulty. I tried several with my vinaigrette, and it was only after considerable effort that I got them restored to consciousness. I remember distinctly one

old woman who refused to lift up her head, and who said,

"Toots! let me abee. It's a' the faut o' the minister!"

Interrogated—Did you remark any omission in his services?

Depones—On one occasion he read no portion of the Holy Scriptures. In the first English sermon, which was in Romans xii. 13, he was speaking about hospitality, and it seemed to me that he was aiming at our family, as we had not shown him any attention.

Do you think that he is a man fitted for the rough work of the parish of Veto?

Depones—I do not.

Interrogated—From your knowledge of the people, do you consider that the presentee is fitted to edify them in spiritual matters?

Depones—I most decidedly do not.

CROSS-EXAMINED for the presentee—How long have you resided in the parish?

Depones—All my life.

How many years is that?

Depones—I decline to answer.

Your mother and you reside in the manse?

Yes.

"And mean to do so as long as they can!" called out another voice from the gallery.

Moderator—"Really we must clear the court if this interruption is continued."

Mr Garrempey—I think you said, Miss M'Cork-screw, that you thought the text of the first sermon was chosen by the presentee for the purpose of irritating those who intended to oppose him?

Depones—Yes.

You mean by that, yourself and your relatives, who are objectors?

Depones—Of course.

Are your remarks with regard to the text as to hospitality applicable to the same parties?

Depones—Yes.

Then I understand you to say that, as you intended to oppose him, and as you fancied he was aware of that, he selected texts and psalms with a view to irritate and provoke you?

Depones—Yes.

How did you come to oppose him?

Oh! we just heard that he was not a good preacher, and did not attend to the interests of the parish he had. We had letters from Snuffmull to that effect from people we knew there.

And, said Garrempey, slyly—

I suppose they would have told you that he was a married man?

Well—that is—I'm not sure, said Miss Flora, blushing. Perhaps they did.

At all events, you soon came to know it?

Yes, we did hear it.

There were considerable signs of annoyance manifested by the occupants of the "Pew" at these answers, but as the back of the witness was turned to her friends, she did not observe their looks of dissatisfaction. M'Cringer was seen to bite his lips pretty frequently.

Interrogated—Then the opinion you had formed of the presentee before he preached was not in any way altered?

No; it was strengthened.

Was there a good deal of talk in the parish about the presentation?

Yes.

You and your friends would, I suppose, continued Garrempey, have no hesitation in mentioning to the people what you had heard about the presentee?

Depones—Certainly not. We considered it a duty to do so.

Mr Garrempey—I am not finding fault with you for doing it. Now, you have signed objections which state that the parish requires a young, vigorous, and energetic minister. Do you adhere to that?

Depones—Most certainly.

How young do you think the minister should be?

Depones—I really don't know. Younger than the presentee, at any rate.

You know the witness who was examined before the last—the Rev. Mr Sneaker?

The witness answered, with a slight tremour—
Yes.

Is he such a young man as you think would suit you?

Depones—I suppose he would, or any young and vigorous minister.

Then I understand that you are not particular, provided the person is young and vigorous?

Depones—I expect him to be qualified otherwise, of course.

And to be unmarried? asked Garrempey, in a pawky voice.

Depones—I have no answer to make to such a question. (Considerable tittering.)

Has Mr Sneaker been residing in the manse during his visit here?

Depones—Yes.

He has an aunt living in Porterbier?

Yes.

Does it consist with your knowledge that your friends made application to Government to get the

parish for Mr Sneaker before Mr Ochtertyre got his presentation ?

Depones—I know nothing personally about the matter.

Interrogated—If the presentee is not fitted, in your opinion, to edify the people, how do you account for the call being signed by four hundred parishioners, while the objections have only been subscribed by fifty?

Depones—I don't know, unless they have been canvassed to do it.

Interrogated — Were you yourself among the parties who were laughing on the occasions you refer to ?

Depones—I was, and I could not help it.

Mr Garrempey—Just so. I have no more questions.

RE-EXAMINED for the objectors—

Did you go to hear the presentee for the purpose of giving him a fair hearing ?

Depones—I did.

All which is truth.

• (Signed) F. L. M'CORKSCREW.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

“ She hasn't come out so well as I thought,” said Puncheon, moodily. “ I'm afraid she's done us more harm than good.”

"O ! I don't think so," said Poind, endeavouring to look cheery, although he felt that a *faux pas* had been committed.

"Who do you propose to examine next?" said Sheepshanks.

"Well, I intended to examine Mr Puncheon or yourself; but, on consideration, I think I must reserve you in the meantime, and take some of the people."

"Ma bower," said Stirk, "is here. A think he'll mak' a guid witness."

"I haven't examined him," said Poind; "but if you think he'll do, we can go on with him."

"Murdoch Grant, a witness for the objectors," called out the beadle.

"Here," said Murdoch, coming forward.

Moderator—"Where do you live, Murdoch?"

"She'll be leeving, ma lord," said Murdoch, who had once been before the sheriff for sheep-stealing, and never forgot the occasion.—"She'll be leeving at Ballymachashaclashaclachalan."

Moderator—"Well, that is a jaw-breaker, and no mistake! Can you spell it?"

Rev. Mr Skirleywhitter—"I know the place, and can spell it quite well."

Moderator—"What do you do at this Ballymac-hacla—l—l—allan?"

"A'm bower tae Mr Hyland Stirk there."

Rev. Dr Browser—"What's a bower?"

Witness—"A jist hae the milk o' Mr Stirk's kye,
an' pey him sae muckle for't."

Rev. Dr Browser—"We must make this plain,
that they may understand it in the Assembly. I
never heard of such a personage before as a bower."

Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"Why, doctor, it's the
same as the word Boor or Boer in *platt deutsch*, or
Bauer in *hoch deutsch*, signifying a farm servant, or
one who has charge of cattle. Of course it's derived
from the Greek *βοῦς*—then we have the Latin *Bos*,
and the French *Bœuf*. The Scotch bower is derived
from the Saxon."

Rev. Dr Browser—"Exactly; but it seems here to
signify something different. Do you feed the cattle,
Murdoch?"

"Na!" replied the bower, who was sitting with
his mouth and eyes distended, looking from one
to another, wondering what the discussion was all
about, and what Greek and Latin had to do with
his occupation. "Mr Stirk feeds and tak's care
o' them hisel', an' a just pey a soum o' money for
the milk."

Rev. Dr Browser—"Who milks the cows?"

Witness—"A dae."

Rev. Dr Browser—"I don't think the Assembly will
understand the term bower without an explanation.

Perhaps some member of presbytery would suggest one."

Rev. Mr Mackintrowsers—"Weel, Moderator, I theen—yays—I theen—that as Mr Stirk is tainant o' the land, the booer—yays—the booer could be ca'ad the tainant o' the meelk." (Great laughter from all parts of the church.)

Rev. Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"I'm afraid, Mr Mackintrowsers, we can't adopt your definition. I don't think there will be any difficulty experienced by the Assembly about it."

The witness being solemnly sworn and examined,
Depones—A hae been bower to Mr Hyland Stirk
for aboot four years, an' a'm a communicant in the
pairish church. A was at some o' his trial discourses,
but no the haill o' them.

Interrogated—Were the sermons connected ?

Depones—A dinna think it.

Were they abrupt ?

Depones—Ay.

Interrogated—Did they give you any instruction ?

Depones—Ou ay.

At this answer, little Stirk roared out, "He disna onderstaun ye."

Mr Poind—Murdoch, I don't think you comprehend what I mean ?

Witness—Weel, may be.

Interrogated—Did the sermons satisfy you ?

Depones—Weel, no a' thegither. A hae heerd better whiles.

“This will never do,” whispered Sheepshanks to Stirk. “I thought you could reckon upon this man.”

“So a can, but he's no exeminin' him properly.”

“Well, it can't be helped now,” said the other, looking anything but pleased.

Interrogated—Did you pay attention to his prayers ?

Depones—Ay.

Were you pleased with them ?

Depones—No verra muckle.

What sort of prayers were they ?

Depones—Jist the ordnar kind.

Did the presentee open his eyes ?

Depones—Whiles.

How often ?

Depones—A dinna ken. A saw him wanst, whan there was a noise o' folk on the stairs.

Did his manner of preaching distract your attention ?

Depones—No that a mind o'.

Could you follow him ?

Ou ay.

Interrogated—Did he speak fast ?

Depones—Raither.

Were his prayers wanting in unction ?

Depones—Ay.

Interrogated—Did he elucidate his text properly ?

Depones—A think no.

Was there anything peculiar about his appearance ?

Witness—A dinna tak' ye up.

Has he red hair ?

Depones—A think sae.

Does he squint ?

Depones—A'm no verra sure. A was sitten raither far back.

Interrogated—Is his nose too small for the size of his face ?

Depones—A wasna' thinkin' aboot his nose.

You think that his services were not such as would edify the people of Veto ?

Depones—A hae heerd better.

Interrogated—Is the parish of Veto very rough, and are the roads steep ?

Depones—Raither, but a've seen waur.

You signed the objections and adhere to them ?

Depones—Ay.

You were paying every attention, and you can give the texts and psalms ?

Ou ay. (Witness here repeated the texts and psalms.)

Interrogated—Did you observe any people sleeping?

Ay, that's ower aften the case.

"I'm afraid, Mr Puncheon," said Poind, in a whisper, "we cannot make much of this witness. I think I'll stop."

"Very well," replied the other.

Mr Poind—I have no further questions.

CROSS-EXAMINED for the presentee.

Mr Garrempey—Well, Murdoch, did you take any notes of the sermons?

Murdoch, whose knowledge of notes extended no further than handling bank notes, asked,

Did a tak' what?

Did you put down in writing anything you heard the presentee preach?

Depones—No me.

Then how do you come to give the texts and psalms so readily?

Murdoch (evidently flustered) — Ou, ye see—then with a sudden stop,—she'll no onderstaun. her English's maist dune.

Come now, sir, recollect you're upon your oath, and that other witnesses are to be examined as to this.

Mr Poind—There's no occasion to frighten the witness.

Mr Garrempey—Did anybody give you the texts recently to commit to memory ?

Witness—Am a obleeged tae answer that question ? Am feered am beginnin' no tae unerstaun'. Railly, her English's maist dune.

Moderator—You must try, Murdoch, to remember a little more English, and to tell the truth, but we can examine you in Gaelic through a sworn interpreter if you like.

Aweel, if she maun answer—a got the texts last nicht frae Mr Stirk !

Mr Garrempey—Just so ; and if you hadn't you could not, I suppose, have told us what they were ?

A jaloose no.

Interrogated—Can you tell what the presentee was preaching about ?

Ou ay. He was telling us aboot oör sins, an' that we sud a' repent.

But do you not know what was the subject of his texts ?

Depones—No the noo.

What do you mean by saying that the sermons were not connected ?

Depones—Weel, jist that they werena conneckit weel enuch. A thocht he might hae made mair oot o' them.

What do you mean by abrupt ?

A think it's roun' aboot.

Were the sermons long ?

Na.

Well, what was the matter with them ?

Depones—A canna verra weel say. They didna pleese me muckle.

You say the prayers wanted unction ?

Ay.

What's the meaning of unction ?

Murdoch scratched his head and looked puzzled.

At last he said, with some hesitation—

A think it's a sort o' ointment.

Moderator—How did you come to learn that, Murdoch ?

Weel, an acquaintance o' mine tel't me sae the ither day.

Does he belong to the parish Church ?

Na ; he's a Papish.

Moderator—I thought as much. You should have nothing to do with such characters, Murdoch.

Ou, he's a verra decent man, sir.

Mr Garrempey—Did you read the objections over before you signed them ?

Na ; Mr Stirk tauld me it was a' richt.

Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"I suppose we must infer from the witness' name that he took it for granted."

Mr Garrempey—Now, Murdoch, I'm going to

ask you a question which you needn't answer unless you like—Were you ever tried and convicted for sheep-stealing?

Weel, a'm no gaun tae tell a lee aboot it. A was; but it's a lang time sin', whan a was young an' foolish, but a hae been an honest man sin' syne.

Mr Garrempey—I have no more questions.

All which is truth.

(Signed) M. GRANT.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

EVIDENCE FOR THE PRESENTEE—HUISTAN M'HIUISTAN GIVES THE PRESBYTERY OF DUUNDERHEAD A BIT OF HIS MIND—SCENES DURING HIS EXAMINATION — MR SHARPER POIND RECEIVES SOME SHARP RUBS—CONCLUSION OF THE EVIDENCE.

AFTER the examination of the last witness, the objectors held a consultation to determine upon their future course.

"How do you intend to proceed now, Mr Poind?" said Sheepshanks.

"Well, I think I must just examine one or two of yourselves."

"The only awkward thing," observed Puncheon, "is that matter of our application to the Lord Advocate, on behalf of Mr Sneaker. I took rather too prominent a part, to be able to get out of it, if I'm examined. Were it not for that, and one or two other things I would rather not be asked about, I would willingly go forward."

"Well," said Sheepshanks, "I'll go. I was not at home when you took these steps, and I can, of course, say that I have no personal knowledge of them."

"So can I," said Stirk; "A recolec' a was at the Fa'kirk Tryst."

"Well, gentlemen, you see how matters stand. You'll be tightly cross-examined. The presbytery are afraid to interfere further on our behalf. Quaigh-horn and Fillyerglass can come after you, and then we will complete our evidence with a dozen or so of the most intelligent of the common people."

It is not our intention to go further into the evidence led for the objectors, as it was merely a repetition of what we have already given. Suffice it to say, that they examined upwards of thirty witnesses, and having got the presbytery to analyze the call, they closed their case. Immediately on the objectors renouncing probation in chief, the presbytery proceeded to take evidence for the presentee. Garrempey had carefully precognosed his witnesses. They had, besides, the advantage of hearing the whole evidence for the objectors. The continued reference to texts and psalms, had impressed them upon their minds, and they had thus become thoroughly familiar with the different points upon which they were likely to be cross-examined. They had also been assiduously drilled in the general doctrines of the church, and the constituent parts of prayer. Some of the more zealous did what they had probably not done since they had found themselves

"Creeping like snail unwillingly to school,"

that is, they went carefully over the Shorter Catechism, and had become more than a match for Poind, in Dogmatic Theology. We have now to deal with the evidence for the presentee, which we give, as in the case of the last witness, just as spoken by the witnesses, although it was not taken down so in the record of evidence.

EVIDENCE FOR THE PRESENTEE.

COMPEARED—Huistan M'Huistan, innkeeper, Porterbier, who, being solemnly sworn and examined as a witness for the presentee,

Depones—A hae leeved in the village o' Porterbier a' ma life. A ken the pairish o' Veto perfectly weel, an' a' the pairishes aboot.

Interrogated—Is it of the character described in the objections?

Depones—Na. It's nae mair hilly nor steep nor ony o' the ither pairishes. There's far waur pairishes tae walk ower, than this ane. The pairish o' Ochonochree's a heep waur nor Veto.

Rev. Mr McCringer—"I deny that."

Huistan—"Ye needna fash denyin't. A' body kens't."

Interrogated—Do you know the parish of Lochspelding?

Depones—A dae. A hae been there mony a time.

What sort of a parish is it in comparison with Veto?

Depones—It's five times mair difficult tae traivel ower than this ane; the roads are verra bad, an' a heep steeper nor oors.

You know the presentee?

A dae that. He's been stayin' in ma hoose sin he cam' here, but a didna ken him afore that, altho' a heerd a great deal aboot him being an excellent minister, an' a great Gaalic scholard.

Interrogated—Have you seen him walk?

Depones—Mony a time. A walked alang wi' him frae ma ain door tae Mr M'Clinger's manse, aboot sax weeks syne. The distance is aboot fifteen or saxteen miles. We gaed ower the hills pairt o' the wey.

How did he walk?

Depones—He walked as weel's me or the man wha was wi' us.

Interrogated—Did he seem tired?

No the least; an' a believe he cud hae walked back again easy enuch.

Interrogated—Do you know that certain parties in the parish got up an opposition to the presentee before he came here to preach?

Mr Poind—"Moderator, I must object to this question ; it is incompetent."

Mr Garrempey—"The Moderator and the Presbytery know too well, Mr Poind, that no question could be more competent under Lord Aberdeen's Act. It is essential to know whether the objections have arisen from causeless prejudice or—"

Moderator—"You needn't argue the point, Mr Garrempey ; we are quite clear that we must allow the question. I don't think, Mr Poind, you should insist."

Mr Poind—"Very well."

And the question being repeated,

Depones—A ken that the opposition was got up afore the presentee cam' here.

How do you know that?

Depones—Because a was axed tae attend a meetin' aboot it.

Did you go to the meeting?

Depones—A did.

Interrogated—Whom did you see there?

Depones—A' the folk in the box ower there (pointing to where Puncheon and his friends were sitting.)

Dark and sinister looks were directed to Huistian as he pointed, with a comical grin, to the pew.

"Tam the fallow!" whispered Stirk ; "he's gaun tae dae us a heep o' hairm!"

"Did you see his laird," said Sheepshanks to Puncheon, "about spoiling his lease?"

"I did, but he'd been there before me, and got it signed."

"What a pity!" muttered Sheepshanks. "He's a cunning rascal."

Interrogated—Did the parties you have referred to agree to oppose the presentee?

Depones—They did. They tauld me he was a bad preecher, that he had the pairish o' Lochspelding, and that he didna attend tae't properly. They said, tae, he was a lameter, an' past the prime o' life.

Interrogated—Was there any application made to the Lord Advocate previously for the appointment of any other person?

The parties in the "box ower there," as Huistan called it, were thrown into a state of great consternation at the course which was being pursued on behalf of the presentee. Puncheon rushed over to Poind in a state of great excitement, and whispered, but loud enough to be heard by Garrempey, "You must stop this."

Mr Garrempey—"Neither you nor your agent, nor any one else, shall stop this, Mr Puncheon. I heard what you said. You had better go back to your seat, sir. You will find I am not to be trifled with."

Rev. Mr M'Cringer—"I think, Moderator, that this inquiry is incompetent."

Moderator—"I'm afraid, Mr M'Cringer, we must allow it to go on."

Rev. Dr Browser—"There can be no doubt about it. It is absolutely necessary that the fullest inquiry should be permitted. I for one will not be responsible should the presbytery determine otherwise."

Rev. Dr Totty M'Killrussell—"I quite concur."

Rev. Mr Bouncer—"So do I. I'm not going to give any occasion for the intervention of the civil power."

The other members of presbytery, after these expressions of opinion, were deterred from supporting M'Cringer, who, seeing how things stood, did not press the matter further.

The question being repeated,

The witness depones—There was application made tae the Lord Advocat.

At this stage, Sneaker was observed stealthily to leave the church.

"He's sneaking awa'," whispered Huistan to one of his supporters.

Did you see the application ?

Depones—I did, and a was axed tae sign't.

Interrogated—In whose favour was it made ?

Not a sound could be heard after this question was put.

Depones—It was in favours o' the Rev. Mr Sneaker.

At this announcement, as Huistan afterwards said, he heard a great *sough*, as of people who had been keeping in their breath, and then a confused murmuring noise filled the church.

Interrogated—Did you sign the paper in favour of Mr Sneaker?

Depones—A did not.

Interrogated—Did you attend another meeting, after the presentee had preached, got up for the purpose of continuing the opposition?

Depones—A did. It was a verra crooked meetin'.

Who was chairman?

Depones—Hyland Stirk.

A canna see his heed the noo, the witness added. This was said with a look and tone of contempt, evidently caused by Stirk's diminutive stature. In an instant this fiery little Celt appeared on his legs, and shouted in a defiant voice,

“What hae ye tae say aboot me?”

Huistan—Ou! ye're there are ye? A hae naething verra guid tae say aboot ye.

Interrogated—Were the parties you have named before at this meeting also?

Ou ay; an' the Rev. Mr Sneaker an' Miss M'Cork-screw. They cam' tae the meetin' cleekit thegither, an' they sat close tae ane anither the haill time.

Great was the mirth among the young ladies at this answer. Miss M'Corkscrew had previously drawn down her veil.

Interrogated—What was the result of this meeting?

Depones—The objectors did an' said a' they cud agin' the presentee, but the people beat them, an' cairried their motion in favours o' Mr Ochtertyre.

Interrogated—Did you hear the presentee's trial discourses?

Depones—A did.

What did you think of them?

Depones—A ne'er heerd better Gaalic sermons nor prayers a' ma life. A can read, write, an' speak the Gaalic.

Interrogated—Did you attend the English services?

Depones—A did.

What opinion did you form of them?

Depones—They were as guid, if no better, nor the maist a hae heerd in oor kirk.

Interrogated—What impressions did the sermons make upon you?

Depones—The proper feelings that folk sud hae at public worship.

Did you feel that you were edified, and that the minister gave expression to your wants and petitions?

Depones—A did that indeed.

Did you think that there was any want of warmth or earnestness in the preacher?

Depones—A never saw a man mair earnest in what he said.

Interrogated—Was the audience quiet and attentive?

Depones—Ou ay; benna the folk ower there, wha were a' lauchin' and talkin' jist as if they'd been in a playhoose instead o' a kirk.

“It's a lie, sir!” exclaimed Puncheon, rising in great wrath.

“It's nae a lie,” called out several voices from among the audience. One individual was heard to say, “Everybody saw you. It was scandalous conduct.”

Great confusion now ensued. Donald M'Wheeslit was busy roaring out at intervals, “Seelence, or I'll pit ye a' oot!” Huistan was on his legs, towering above the crowd, gesticulating and shaking his large fist in the direction of the “folks ower there,” while Puncheon and Stirk, mounted on the pew table, were going through similar gymnastic evolutions in their entrenchments.

Several members of presbytery were obliged to leave their box and to go among the parties to restore order. They succeeded at last. Garrempey managed, by dint of strenuous tugging at Huistan's coat-tails, to bring that Goliath to an anchor.

Interrogated—Did you see anybody asleep?

Depones—Ay; a wheen auld wives wha appeiringly canna sleep onywhere but in the kirk.

Mr Garrempey—Now, Mr M'Huistian, I suppose you know the people of this parish very well?

Depones—A ken every mither's son o' them, an' a min' Mr Puncheon's faither when he was only a—

Mr Garrempey—Never mind that.

Is it your opinion that the great majority of the people are in favour of the presentee?

There's naething shurer nor that, for haenna five hundred o' them signed the ca'? Ay, an' a guid lock mair wud hae dune sae but for fear o' some folk a ken.

Interrogated—Is there any other reason why more names are not adhibited to the call?

Depones—Ay. The ca' sud hae been left wi' the pairish schulemaister at Porterbier, whar the great buik o' the people leeve, but instead o' that it was gien tae Mr Leonard Smites, wha teaches a private schule, an' wha's hoose is twa-three mile awa'. Whan the folk gaed there they was tauld he

wasna at hame. A hae nae doot he keepit awa' on purpose, accordin' tae instructions.

Mr Smites—"You have no right to make such an insinuation, sir."

The appearance of this individual was greeted with a storm of hisses.

Huistan—"Ye did a' in your pooer, whan some o' the folk did catch ye, tae mak' them believe it was only communicants wha cud sign."

"He did that," said a woman in the back seats.

Interrogated—Is it your deliberate opinion, from what you know of the people and the presentee, that he is fitted to make a good and useful minister for them?

Depones—There's nae doot o't.

Interrogated—Do you recollect of meeting the Rev. Mr M'Cringer in the village of Porterbier some six weeks ago about a bargain of sheep?

The rev. gentleman was here observed to become very fidgetty, and to whisper something to Poind.

Depones—Ay; A remember it weel.

Interrogated—Did he upon that—

Mr Poind—"Really, Moderator, I must object to this line of examination. It has nothing to do with the merits of the case."

Moderator—"What do you say to that, Mr Garrempey?"

Mr Garrempey—"I presume, Moderator, that we have a conjunct probation. Is there any doubt of that?"

Moderator—"None whatever."

Mr Garrempey—"Well, then, if you turn to Mr M'Cringer's evidence, you will see that he refers to this meeting, and gives his own account of it. I am, therefore, clearly entitled to lead this evidence in—"

Moderator—"You need go no further. I cannot see how it can be objected to. You had better not insist, Mr Poind."

Interrogated—Did you upon that occasion hear Mr M'Cringer say that he had been asked by the Rev. Dr Brower to preach for him?

Depones—A did. He said it in presence o' Airthy Campbell, and Jock M'Whannel.

Rev. Mr M'Cringer rising, and very much excited—"There must be some very great mistake."

Huistan—"A verra great mistake, nae doot, to state what wasna true."

Interrogated—Do you know the parties who have signed the call?

Depones—Every ane o' them.

Do they attend the parish church?

Depones—Reglar.

How many of them are communicants?

Depones—Aboot twa hundert an' fifty.

Interrogated—Do you know those who have signed the objections?

Depones—Brawly. There's only fifty o' them, an' they're a' mair or less under the thoomb o' the folks ower the wey.

Interrogated—How many people in the parish, so far as you know, don't understand Gaelic?

Depones—Aboot a dozen.

Then, I understand you to say that it is a Gaelic-speaking parish?

Naebody doots that.

Mr Garrempey—"Moderator, I have no further questions."

CROSS-EXAMINED for the objectors—You're an inn-keeper in Porterbier?

Ay; but a'm mair nor that. The inns an' grounds belang tae mysel'; an' a hae a lairge fairm, for which a pey £500 a year o' rent, Mr Poind.

Have you taken a great interest in this case?

Depones—A hae; an' a think it's the duty o' every parishioner tae dae sae.

Mr Poind—I'm not asking you about your duty.

Huistan—But a'm telling ye.

Interrogated—Have you done all in your power to help the presentee?

Depones—A hae; and he deserves a' a can dae fur him,

Mr Poind—"Just answer my questions, Huistan."

Huistan—"Mr M'Huistan, if ye pleese, sir. A've as guid a richt tae be ca'ad 'Mr' as ony bit writer body frae Glasgae."

Mr Poind—"I appeal to the court for protection."

Huistan—"Ye hae nae buzziness to ca' me Huistan."

Interrogated—Did you go about getting people to sign the call?

Depones—A did; an' a'm only sorry that yer freen, Mr Smites, keepit me frae getting mair.

Interrogated—Did you use influence to get them to sign?

Depones—Na, sir. A didna copy yer freens in that.

Interrogated—Did you give them whisky?

Depones—A gied naebody whuskey tae sign the ca'; but a ken some folk wha gied people draff tae sign the objections. (Sensation.)

Interrogated—You say you were satisfied with the presentee's services, including his prayers. Can you tell us what are the constituent elements of prayer?

Depones—Prayers ought tae consist o' adoration, confession o' sins, supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving?

Interrogated—Were all these included in the prayers you heard?

Depones—They were sae, indeed.

Did the presentee open his eyes during prayer?

Depones—Ance or twice, a think; but a hae seen
ither ministers dae sae far aftener.

Interrogated—Who have you seen doing so?

Depones—The Rev. Mr M'Cringer there, is ane o'
the greatest blinkers a ever seed. (Great laughter.)

The reverend gentleman looked at Poind with an
expression anything but grateful.

Were not the discourses abrupt and unconnected,
and the texts inapplicable?

Depones—Naething o' the kind. They were as weel
conneekit as ony discourses a hae been in the habit o'
hearin'.

Interrogated—Does not the presentee speak hur-
riedly and with too loud a voice?

Depones—He does not. His voice is lood, but no
too lood.

Has he red hair?

Depones—Ay; but what o' that?

Does he squint?

Depones—A wee.

Is his nose too small for the size of his face?

Depones—That's a maiter o' taste. A heerd a
lady say the ither day she thocht yours was a heep
ower lairge.

This answer came like a thunder clap upon poor

Poind, who certainly had plenty of nose, and of a decidedly Napoleon the Third cast to boot. He saw Miss M'Phillabeg and several other ladies in fits of laughter. So, in a hurried and flustered manner he said,

"Moderator, I see this witness is determined not merely to equivocate, but to be impertinent, so I shall put no more questions to him."

"A'm muckle obleeged to ye," said Huistan.

Moderator—"Is there any member of court who would like to put further questions?"

Nobody having answered, the clerk finished with the usual—All which is truth.

(Signed) H. M'HUISTAN.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

COMPEARED—The Rev. Dr Browser, minister of the Parish of Blairorgan, who, being solemnly sworn and examined,

Depones—I never asked the Rev. Alister M'Clinger to preach for me.

All which is truth.

(Signed) P. BROWSER.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

COMPEARED—Archibald Campbell, cattle dealer, Porterbier, who being solemnly sworn and interrogated,

Depones — A recollec' meetin' the Rev. Mr M'Cringer an' Mr M'Huistan in the village, aboot sax weeks ago. They were makin' a bargain aboot sheep. A heerd Mr M'Cringer sayin' he was tae preech for the Rev. Dr Brower first Sabbath.

Who was there besides those you have mentioned ?

Depones—Jock M'Whannel.

Mr Poind—“I have no questions. I believe it's a conspiracy against the rev. gentleman.”

Witness—“It's as true's death,” All which is truth.

(Signed) A. CAMPBELL.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKIORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

M'Whannel gave evidence to the same effect.

COMPEARED—Donald Frisheal, assistant to Mr M'Huistan, innkeeper, Porterbier, who, being solemnly sworn and examined,

Depones—A was born and brocht up in the pairish o' Veto, an' ken a the folks in't. They wud a' sign for the presentee, if they had their ain wey. It's no a verra hilly pairish. A walked wi' Mr M'Huistan an' the presentee frae Porterbier tae Mr M'Cringer's manse, maistly ower the hills. It's aboot

fifteen or saxteen mile awa. The presentee walked back wi' me next day. He can walk as weel's me.

Interrogated—Did you attend the trial services?

Depones—A did. A never heerd better in oor kirk at ony rate. A min' a wheen o' the texts an' psalms, but no the haill o' them. They were quite weel conneckit, in ma opinion. It's verra easy to fin' faut whan a body wishes tae dae sae. Every ane wha spoke tae me aboot the services was verra weel pleased, excep' the objectors. A'm a communicant.

CROSS-EXAMINED for the objectors.

Had you a bastard child, Donald?

Did ye'll ever had ony yersel'? said Donald, furiously. Ye look mair like a wuman nor me. (Laughter.)

I mean, said Poind, a little flustered. Was there a girl in the village who had a child lately, of which you are the faither?

Ye'll better gang an' ax her wha's the faither? said Donald, recovering his coolness.

Recollect, sir, said Poind, with a look intended to be mightily severe, that you're upon your oath.

A ken that as weel's you, replied the witness.

Interrogated—Do you refuse to answer the question?

Ye'd better go an' ax Mr Puncheon's servant girl that ye were kissin' at the back o' the gairden hedge the ither nicht.

Poind was completely staggered by this unexpected answer, while the audience were in roars of laughter.

Miss M'Phillabeg appeared to enjoy the scene amazingly.

"Moderator," at length gasped out Poind, "This individual is endeavouring to screen himself by defaming my character. I fully believe that the witnesses for the presentee have formed a conspiracy to injure the character of all who are opposed to them."

Witness—"Naething o' the kind, sir. A saw ye mysel', an' if the lassie was here, a believe she wadna deny't. Ye hae nae richt, sir, to try an' hurt ma karakter, which is as guid, an' may be a heep better nor yours, if a' things was kent."

"I don't believe a word this fellow has spoken," said Puncheon.

"A dinna care a tinkler's whussel whether ye dae or no. Altho' some folks are feared for ye, am no ane o' them."

Moderator—"We must really put an end to this. I suppose you have no more questions, Mr Poind?"

"No."

All which is truth.

(Signed) D. FRISHEAL.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

The next witness filled the hearts of the objectors with dismay. Jessie Macgregor was called and took her seat.

"I say, Porter, what the deuce is the meaning of this? Why, here's your servant," said Sheepshanks.

"Blessed if I know," said that placid individual. "She gave me warning that she intends to leave next week, that's all I know about the matter."

COMPEARED—Jessie Macgregor, domestic servant with Mr Porter, Brewer, Veto, who, being solemnly sworn and examined,

Depones—A hae been in Mr Porter's service for aboot twa years, an' a'm lea'in' there next week. A hae seen the Rev. Mr M'Cringer, Mr Puncheon, Mr Sheepshanks, Mr Stirk, an' ither, in Mr Porter's hoose, gey an' often sin the pairish becam' vacant. They were makin' oot objections agin' the presentee one time they were there. A heerd them readin' them, and Mr M'Cringer was writin' them an' makin' changes.

Interrogated—Are you sure of that?

Depones—As shure's am here.

Mr Puncheon, (to Sheepshanks), "O, the limmer; who would have thought of this!"

How did you happen to see and hear what you have stated?

Depones—A was aye bringin' het water intill the room for their toddy, and waitin' the table.

Interrogated—Do you know anything of the reason why the presentee was invited to preach at Ochonochree?

Depones—Ou ay. They wantit tae ken hoo he cud walk ower the warst part o' the pairish, an' tae tak' the measure o' his breeks. (Great laughter.)

Did you hear this spoken about at the meetings you have referred to?

Depones—A did that, an' a thocht it ma duty, as a Christian wuman, tae pit the poor minister on his gaird.

“Confound the besom!” ejaculated Porter, now fairly roused, “she shan’t enter my door again.”

Interrogated—Did you attend the church when the presentee preached his trial discourses?

Depones—A did.

Were you satisfied?

Depones—Verra muckle.

You did not sign the call?

Depones—Na. A was feared, but a wad dae’t noo, as a’m gaun tae lea’.

Mr Garrempey—“That’s all.”

CROSS-EXAMINED for the objectors.

Whose service are you going to now?

A’m jist gaun’ hame tae ma mither.

"I have no further questions, Moderator. I don't believe one word the girl says. Any one who would act as she has done, is not worthy of belief."

Witness—"Ye ken better nor that, Mr Poind, for ye were there yersel', an' maybe a cud tell mair aboot you nor ye wad like tae hear."

Moderator—"Tut, tut, tut! No more of this."

All which is truth.

(Signed) JESSIE MACGREGOR.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

Mr Garrempey—"Call Thomas Beg."

"Good gracious!" said Stirk, "that's M'Cringer's man. What are they tae be aboot noo?"

COMPEARED—Thomas Beg, farm servant to the Rev. A. M'Cringer, who, being solemnly sworn and examined,

Depones—A recollec' on a Saturday, aboot sax weeks syne, o' the presentee, Mr M'Huistan an' his man, walking ower tae the manse. They cam' ower the hills pairt o' the wey, an' met me a few miles frae the kirk. The distance is aboot sixteen mile.

Did the presentee and M'Cringer walk out after dinner?

Depones—Ay.

How far did they go?

Depones—Aboot four mile.

It came on to rain ?

Ay ; an' a went wi' the gig for them.

Was it a rough part of the parish ?

Depones—Gey an' rough.

Did the presentee appear fatigued ?

Depones—A saw nae marks o' fatigue aboot him.

Did you see him leap over a ditch ?

Depones—A did.

What is the breadth of it ?

Depones—A think aboot thirteen feet. It was filled wi' water.

Interrogated—Did he walk home on Sunday ?

Depones—He left the kirk tae walk.

Mr Garrempey—"That's all."

Mr Poind—"No questions." All which is truth.

(Signed) T. BEG.

T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

INKHORN SKIRLEYWHITTER, Clerk.

Besides the foregoing parties, a good number of other witnesses were examined with regard to the sermons and other services, but for the reason previously stated, we do not think it necessary to go further into the evidence. After all the witnesses for the presentee had been examined, the Presbytery proceeded to read the sermons. The reading being concluded, the evidence was closed by a minute in the following terms :—

"The Procurators for the objectors and presentee declare their respective proofs concluded, except in so far as the General Assembly may allow further evidence, upon the appeals taken in course thereof, and the presbytery accordingly circumduces the term for proving against both parties. Further, the said Procurators do not consider it necessary to address the court upon the evidence. The presbytery fixed this day fortnight, at the same place, at twelve o'clock noon, for giving judgment in the case."

Closed with prayer.

(Signed) • T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

CHAPTER XXIV.

STATE OF PARTIES—MACHINATIONS OF THE REV. MR SNEAKER—DESIGNS UPON THE WIDOW M'CREESH—INGENIOUS OPERATIONS OF MR SHARPER POIND—THE LAW STEALS A MARCH UPON THE GOSPEL—UNEXPECTED MEETING OF THE RIVALS—THE GOSPEL AT A DISCOUNT.

AFTER the close of the evidence, the excitement which had so long existed in the parish sensibly diminished—not that the interest in the issue of the case had abated—on the contrary, now that all the facts and circumstances, or at least as many of them as the presbytery had allowed to be proved, were brought to light, conjectures were rife as to the probable result of the contest, but angry passions and feelings had given place to sober speculations upon the nature of the evidence. Reaction, that inevitable law of nature, began to produce its usual effect upon all parties. Poind no longer experienced the same pleasure in the society of Veto. Sneaker was in like case. Puncheon, Sheepshanks, Stirk, Porter, and others, felt that a period had arrived, when social meetings had lost their zest, there being now nothing either to plan or to execute. The work, so far as they

could do it, was done. A similar feeling affected the opposite party, and so it was, that the parish assumed its normal work-a-day aspect, and the kirk, lately resonant with legal and clerical squabbling, was now voiceless, the only sounds which greeted the ear of the passer-by, except on the Sabbath, being those of the rolling waves of the Atlantic. At the manse there was an evident feeling of constraint, Sneaker and Poind feeling each other's presence excessively uncomfortable. The latter gentleman and Miss M'Phillabeg, who had not yet answered his letter, were likewise in a peculiar position. Miss M'Corkscrew began to think somehow that Sneaker was not quite so tender in his attentions as he used to be. In short, there was that undefinable feeling of discomfort which steals over people who are thrown into each other's society, when excitement begins to wear off—when a common pursuit loses its attraction, and when each fancies that some change is coming over the feelings of the rest. Poind, therefore, departed the day after the evidence was concluded, without having come to any understanding with the provoking Miss Helen—and Sneaker took his leave a few days later, forgetting to display the warmth which he formerly managed to squeeze into his farewells. Poor Flora, with the keen instinct characteristic of her sex, began to have forebodings of some coming evil. As a matter

of course, she communicated these feelings to her cousin. The latter, although she fancied that she had seen through Sneaker, did not think it proper to say what she thought, but, on the contrary, did all she could to dispel the fears of her unhappy relative, as she believed that Sneaker's conduct would be entirely guided by events. It is very difficult to eradicate a suspicion when it has once taken root in the bosom of a woman. Although relieved by the lively ridicule which her cousin cast upon her doubts of Sneaker's affection, she was not reassured.

Fate had so willed it that the representatives of the law and the gospel should run a neck-and-neck race for the heavy stake which had Crossmungo for its winning post.

In this eccentric world of ours it is wonderful how at times circumstances the most casual, and which have apparently no connection with our most cherished plans, lead us, as it were, to follow the very course necessary to accomplish them. Sneaker had an aunt, a sister of Mrs Pry, who had filled, for a good many years, the important position of house-keeper, in the family of a certain nobleman in Perthshire. This lady had, shortly previous to the occurrences before narrated, got married to a rev. gentleman in Glasgow, who had been dubbed LL.D. by some German or American University, in con-

sideration of the exceedingly low sum of eight pounds six shillings and eight pence. It is proper to state, however, that the doctor had established what was considered to be a satisfactory foundation for this honour by having edited a greatly enlarged and materially improved edition of the twopenny spelling book. He had been at one time tutor in the family of the aforesaid nobleman during the house-keeping reign of Miss Larder, or Mrs Larder, as she was designated in the family, for be it understood, that in the houses of the upper ten, there are no such titles as "Miss" allowed to be assumed by the female domestics. They have the choice, however, of being addressed either as simple Sarah Jones, or Mrs Jones, or in their discretion, Mrs Sarah Jones. Doubtless the worthy house-keeper had been very attentive to the young tutor, and it was to this circumstance probably, that the rev. gentleman had acquired, besides a strong liking for good dinners and vintage wines, a very decided taste for hot suppers, in a snug little parlour where covers were only laid for two. Whether or not the fact that the careful house-keeper was possessed of some thousands of pounds had any effect in influencing his choice, certain it is, that shortly after he had been settled in the City of Glasgow, the worthy doctor relieved Miss Larder from the cares and perquisites attendant upon the charge of the domestic affairs of others, and placed her

as Mrs Dr Creed in the more congenial position of looking after her own. Nor was the choice a bad one. Miss Larder had been tolerably well educated, and had acquired from daily contact with the fashionable world a polish and refinement which did no discredit to the doctor's mahogany. Sneaker had, as a matter of course, paid his respects to the married pair, and hoped, in due time, to reap the benefit which might be expected to result from his relationship to a man, who would some day perhaps become one of the pillars of the church, and Moderator of the General Assembly. He had preached on two or three occasions for the doctor in the evening; but, as the rev. gentleman did not feel that he was sufficiently long in his new sphere to run the risk of being considered lazy, he invariably preached during the day himself.

Shortly after his return to Glasgow, from the parish of Veto, Sneaker paid a visit to his aunt. After the usual formalities, and talk about the weather, and similar topics, Mrs Dr Creed said, with a sly look—

“I hope, Adam, you've come to ask us to your wedding?”

“How so?” said Sneaker, blushing.

“It's quite the talk here. The report is that it's all settled, that you're to be married to a Miss

M'Corkscrew, daughter of the late minister of the parish of Veto."

"No such thing. I know the young lady very well, and have been a good deal about the manse, but things haven't come to that pass yet. You know I can't afford to marry at present."

"But I understand that the young lady has a fortune; and then, of course," added Mrs Creed, with a smile, "you're almost sure of the parish, for I'm told the presentee has no chance of getting in."

"I'm not very sure about that; but as to the fortune, all I believe the young lady has, is some expectation of a legacy from her aunt, Mrs M'Creesh of Crossmungo."

"Is Mrs M'Creesh her aunt?"

"Yes," replied Sneaker, wondering what was going to turn up. "I called upon her at Crossmungo sometime ago. She received me very kindly, and asked me to come back again."

"Why, Mrs M'Creesh is one of our most intimate friends! She sits in the doctor's church, and has been several times to tea with us. I was at Crossmungo only yesterday afternoon."

"Is she then at home?" eagerly enquired Sneaker.

"Yes. I daresay if you have any intentions with

regard to Miss M'Corkscrew, she would do something for her."

"I've no particular intentions as to Miss M'Corkscrew, aunt, but"—and he hesitated—

"But what?" said Mrs Creed, looking fixedly upon her hopeful nephew.

"But"—and he again hesitated and blushed.

"Oh! I see, you rascal, you would like to secure the widow, would you?"

"Why not, aunt? She's good-looking, and not very old, and—"

"And," continued the other, "she has plenty of cash.—Is that not it?"

Sneaker said nothing.

"Well, to be sure," resumed the lady, musing, "cash is a great thing. No wonder the Americans call it the 'almighty dollar'—and then a minister has no way of making money; he has only his stipend, in many cases a very meagre one, to meet the wants of a wife and family. If you really are not engaged to the niece, and wish to try your luck with the aunt, I don't see why you shouldn't—I'll ask her to take tea with us some night next week, and drop you a note when I hear from her."

"Thanks, my dear aunt, a thousand thanks! If I succeed, I shall not forget your kindness," said the

ecstatic Sneaker, for now he felt that he had a fair prospect of success.

"What services does she attend?" he eagerly asked.

"She comes in the afternoon. I believe she attends morning service at Crossmungo."

"Do you think the doctor would allow me to preach for him in the afternoon of Sunday first? I should like very much that Mrs M'Creesh had an opportunity of hearing me."

"Well, my dear, I don't know. You see the doctor wishes to work hard. He has a position to gain, and he has not had any one preaching for him since he came here except yourself in the evening; but I'll try what I can do."

"I really wish you would. It will be a little change to the congregation, and will only show the more prominently that the doctor has had no previous assistance."

"Well, there's something in that."

"I mean to call at Crossmungo to-morrow at any rate," said Sneaker, rising to take his leave, "to pay my respects, but, of course, I'll say nothing about what has passed, and needn't let her know that we are related."

"Perhaps it would be as well," said the amiable Mrs Dr Creed. "Good bye—see that you manage

matters discreetly ; widows are, as they say, ‘kittle cattle tae deal wi.’ ”

“ Good-bye, aunt ; I think I’ll commit no blunders.” So saying, this hopeful son of the church departed.

Turn we now to the movements of Poind.

Big with his project of winning the buxom relict of the departed M’Creesh, he determined to take the earliest opportunity of having another talk with his partner on the subject. The latter gentleman, however, was before hand with him, for, on entering the office the morning after Poind came back from Veto, he said—

“ Well, Poind, I see that your fascinating widow has returned with the swallows. Rule pointed her out to me to-day in an elegant barouche, shopping in Buchanan Street ; you should lose no time in seeing her—go down to-morrow. I shall have to make a fresh copy of that letter, as the date won’t do now.”

Accordingly, next day, Poind started for Crossmungo. This time he resolved to do the thing in style. Instead of taking the omnibus, and adopting the plebeian mode of walking up to the house, he selected what he called the “ nobbiest ” hansom he could find in George Square, and drove out at a rapid trot, having told cabby to open the avenue gates, and drive right up to the door at a “ slapping pace.”

On arriving at the house, Poind was shown into a gorgeous drawing-room, where he saw his elegant figure reproduced at every turn he made to admire himself, in the shining mirrors which adorned the apartment. He was not long kept waiting, for Mrs M'Creesh was none of your hair-dressing, and curl-twisting damsels who won't venture to face a visitor without an hour's preparatory application of comb and tongs, and the everlasting "Odonto."

"Good morning, madam," said Poind, in what he considered to be his most engaging manner. "Allow me to introduce myself as Mr Poind, of the firm of Horn and Poind, Writers, Glasgow."

"Guid mornin', sir," said Mrs M'Creesh. "Tak' a chair."

"This letter, madam," said Poind, "will explain the nature of my visit."

Mrs M'Creesh read the epistle without the aid of spectacles, and at once proceeded to business.

"I hae nae intention, Mr Poind, o' sellin' ony pairt o' the lands; but a wadna' objec' tae feu."

"Just what I observed to my partner, Mrs M'Creesh. I said I was sure that a lady like you (he emphasized the word 'lady') would never think of selling any part of such a fine estate. I admire the situation very much," he continued, "and the great taste exhibited in laying off the grounds. I have no

doubt," he added, with a knowing smile, "to whose judgment that's owing."

"Ou a aye keep a guid gairdener, Mr Poind."

"But, of course, you take considerable personal interest and supervision in the laying out of the grounds yourself?"

"Ou ay."

"It's very pleasant," resumed Poind, "to get away from the city to a quiet retreat in the country like this. I have been thinking of buying a place myself, to which I could drive down after the cares and fatigues of business were over for the day. You mustn't suppose, Mrs M'Creesh," he continued, with a mysterious look, "that I am the party who wishes to invest forty thousand pounds in the purchase of land; but—but—I should like very much to have a place myself."

"Are ye mairried, Mr Poind?" asked the widow, slyly.

"Not yet," said Poind, with his heart, as they say, almost at his mouth. "I've been thinking about getting married. I envy my partner, Mr Horn, with his amiable wife and rosy children. When I've been at his house I always resolve on my way home that I shall get a wife and be as comfortable and happy as he is; but business, Mrs M'Creesh, the constant pressure of business, drives

the thought out of my head. I don't know what I shall do when Mr Horn retires. He intends to do so next year, having realised a handsome fortune, and I shall have all the work on my own shoulders." It is needless to say that Horn had no such intention.

"Ye sud hae dune as ma puir man did, Mr Poind—mairried young. He often tell't me—peace be wi' him—that if he had pit aff mairrying till he gat on in buzziness he wadna hae mairried at a'."

"That would have been a great misfortune," thought Poind to himself—"for me."

"But ye'll hae to tak' anither partner, Mr Poind, a reckon."

"What sort of a partner?" said Poind, emboldened by the free and easy style of the lively widow. "Do you mean what is called a sleeping partner?"

"O fie! Mr Poind; hoo can ye speak like that?"

"I'm afraid, Mrs M'Creesh, I shall require two partners—one to help me with business, which is increasing so fast that I cannot attend to it all, and another to help me to forget its cares and troubles, when I get home wearied and fatigued."

Without giving the widow time for a reply, he continued rapidly, "By the bye, I have the pleasure of knowing some of your friends in the parish of

Veto—Mrs M'Corkscrew and her family. I'm engaged as agent for the objectors in the great Veto case. I refused to act at first, as it would take me so very often from home, and would interfere with much more lucrative business ; but Mr Horn, who is a great friend of the family, and their connections, at last consented. I have been down there for nearly a month altogether."

"Dear me!" said Mrs M'Creesh, looking very much interested ; "a wasna' aware o' that. An' hoo are they a'? A maun gang an' see them this simmer—a've aften promised tae gang, but ae thing aifter another aye cam' in the wey. An' what d'ye think o' Flora, ma niece ?"

"She's a very superior young lady," said Poind ; "very much so indeed."

Here was a chance for striking a blow at his rival, Sneaker, and Poind was not the man to let it slip—so he continued—

"I'm very glad that Mr Sneaker and she are so much attached to each other."

"A heerd something aboot it," replied the widow, "but a thocht it was jist what they ca' a flirtation."

"Oh, no!" said Poind ; "they're actually engaged."

"D'ye tell me sae?"

"Fact," said Poind, with the air of a man who is

thoroughly posted up in what he speaks about. "He told me so himself."

This, of course, was not true, for Sneaker was too wary to say anything of the kind; but as in war, so in love, all artifices seem to be allowable.

"Aweel," said the widow, "he seems tae be a verra nice young man."

"I'm not quite certain about that," said Poind, dubiously. "There are some queer reports about him, which I hope are not true. I don't wish to say anything to hurt him, as he's a good friend of mine, and I've done a good deal for him. It's for him, of course," he added, with a knowing wink, "that we're fighting this case, for if we can keep out the presentee, Mr Sneaker is sure of getting the parish."

"Railly! an' what do they say aboot him?"

"I'll tell you by and bye," said Poind, with a mysterious air, "when the case is over; but, for any sake, don't say a word about my mentioning it to you!"

"No me! oh, no!" said the widow, musing.

Poind thought he had gone too far, and tried to modify the impression he had created.

"It's not a very serious matter, I may mention, Mrs M'Creesh, and some people wouldn't care anything about it; but a minister, you know, like Cæsar's

wife, should be above suspicion. You understand, Mrs M'Creesh?"

"A understan' naething aboot Cæsar's wife, nor Cæsar himsel' aithers; but a think a' wives an' a' ministers sud be aboon suspicion; but ye'll tell me a' aboot it, ye say, whan the case is ower? Whan will that be, Mr Poind?"

"Next month. The Assembly will meet about the middle of May. Were you ever at a meeting of the General Assembly, Mrs M'Creesh?"

"No; a haena had that pleesure yet. Ma guidman ance proposed tae tak' me in, but something cam' in the wey. A dinna recollec' what it was."

"Oh! you should really see Edinburgh during the Assembly; it's all life and gaiety. Everybody is out of doors. Ladies, dressed in the very height of fashion, crowd the streets, or drive about in elegant equipages. By the way, my partner, Mr Horn, told me the other day that he was almost falling in love with you in Buchanan Street. He saw you seated in a splendid barouche."

"Oh! Mr Poind, dinna be flatterin' me."

"It's perfectly true," said Poind. "There was a Mr Rule along with him, who pointed you out to my partner."

"Ou ay; that's ma man o' bizziness," replied Mrs M'Creesh.

"Well, Mr Horn spoke so enthusiastically, that it would have made me quite jealous if—if—." Here Poind paused; he did not exactly know what to say, but at last blurted out, "if I were a married man!"

"Oh!" said the widow, "you men's easy pit oot o' sorts."

"Well, but as I was saying, Mrs M'Creesh," resumed Poind, "you should really come into Edinburgh to see the sights, and to hear the case. What with dragoons, and balls at Holyrood Palace, levées held by the Lord High Commissioner, dinners, and evening receptions, you would be highly delighted. I think Mr and Mrs Horn are going in, and I am sure they would be glad to show you everything."

"Ye're verra kind, Mr Poind. A'll think aboot it."

"And then," resumed the lawyer, "you must recollect that your Veto friends will all be there, Mr Puncheon, Miss M'Corkscrew, Miss M'Phillabeg, and others."

"Are they gaun in tae?"

"Of course," replied Poind.

"Aweel, a think a'll gang," replied the widow, to the infinite delight of Poind.

"Then all we have to do is to organise a party," he continued. "I'm sure you would be delighted to make the acquaintance of Mrs Horn, she's such a fine, amiable, motherly woman."

Poind, sly rogue, wished to have her as an ally in his attempt upon the widow.

"A'll be very gled, indeed," said Mrs M'Creesh.

"Suppose she were to call to-morrow, would you be at home?"

"A' day, Mr Poind."

"I was just thinking that she wouldn't like to call merely on my telling her, and that if you were to write a note to say that as there was to be a party organised to go in to Edinburgh at the time of the Assembly, you would be glad to see her here at any time convenient for her to arrange about it?"

"Ou ay. A'll dae that wi' great pleasure."

So Mrs M'Creesh sat down, and wrote a very business-like note on the subject, which she handed to Mr Poind.

"Would it be too much trouble, Mrs M'Creesh, to show me the portion of ground that you propose to feu? If I cannot find a place that I can buy, I don't know but I might take off a portion for myself in the meantime."

"Nae trouble at a', Mr Poind. A'll jist pit on ma bunnet an' shawl, an' gang wi' ye. But, keep me! a haena askit ye tae tak' a glaiss o' wine."

"Oh, never mind, Mrs M'Creesh."

"Oh, but a wull mind. It's no lucky, ye ken, no tae hae a taste ower a bargain, or what may be ane."

So saying, and ringing the bell, she ordered the servant to bring in the decanters.

"Maybe ye wud prefer speerits, Mr Poind ? you gentlemen are for ordinar fond o' something that nips the tongue."

"No, thank you, I prefer wine," said Poind.

"Ye can bring in the speerit case as weel, Lizzie, said the widow, without appearing to notice the refusal."

The refreshments having been produced, Mrs M'Creesh asked Poind to help himself.

"What shall I help you to, Mrs M'Creesh ?"

"Weel, a hae had a rale bad attact o' the tooth-ache this mornin', an' a'm feared wine wadna' dae me ony guid ; a'll jist tak' a wee drap o' the brandy, it's verra mild, rale Martell, as ye'll see by the libel."

Poind at once poured out a glass.

"Losh, me ! Mr Poind, a canna' tak' a' that."

"Oh ! it's very mild ; it wont do you the least harm, and then, as you're going out, it will prevent a return of the attack."

"Weel, a'll no say but yer richt aifter a' !

The brandy somehow disappeared by and bye, in the course of further conversation, and then Mrs M'Creesh remarked "A'll jist gang an' get on ma things."

Poind took this opportunity of settling for, and sending away his hansom.

It is needless to relate the conversation which took place as the interesting pair perambulated the grounds. Mrs M'Creesh was in excellent good humour. We are not warranted in saying that this was entirely owing to the influence of Monsieur Martell, but doubtless the *eau-de-vie* had its share in producing it. Poind was in an equally merry mood. The sly rogue had helped himself to a bumper of brandy whenever the widow left the room, which, with the wine he had previously drank, gave him as much Dutch courage as was necessary to attack half-a-dozen buxom widows.

He was too prudent, however, to risk any thing upon a first interview, by making a declaration. All he strove for, and seemed to accomplish, was to make a favourable impression upon his fair companion. That the widow was really pleased there could be no doubt, and the walk round the estate was prolonged by both.

In the meantime, another visitor made his appearance at Crossmungo. On the door-bell being answered the servant was politely asked by a young gentleman wearing a white tie whether Mrs M'Creesh was at home. The individual in question, as will be doubtless surmised, was no other than the Rev. Mr Sneaker.

"No—Yes," said the girl. "Do you wish to see her?"

"If you please," said Sneaker, a little surprised at her apparent confusion.

"Jist step into the drawing-room," said the girl. "She's oot wi' a gentleman walking ower the grounds, but she'll no be lang."

Sneaker entered the room; his eye at once caught sight of the bottles on the table.

"Aha!" he exclaimed, "this doesn't look very well for me, I'm afraid. Walking out in the grounds too! I think I'll require a "stiffener;" so he took a "durty advantage," as Pat would say, of the unprotected condition of Monsieur Martell. We are bound to say that he found the liquor so good that he took another "hooker," and replaced the abstracted quantity by an equal modicum of water. He had to wait more than half-an-hour before the parties returned. Judge of his horror when he saw the charming widow accompanied by his rival, Poind! Well was it for the clerical beau that he had previously fortified himself. As it was, he was very nearly collapsing; but, making a desperate effort, he advanced with an expression which was intended for a smile, but which had more the appearance of being caused by a severe attack of the mulligrubs. Poind, although taken aback, did not lose his presence of mind. Besides, he was in

high spirits. So going up to Sneaker in the most friendly way, he said in a hearty tone of voice, "How do you do, Mr Sneaker? I have just been trying to make a bargain with Mrs M'Creesh about a feu, but she's asking too much, I'm afraid."

"Dinna say that noo, Mr Poind; ye ken better nor that."

Sneaker did not know very well what to think. He believed that Poind's visit was merely to gain a footing with the widow. Having recovered his coolness, he met Poind's advances with an apparent frankness, which caused that gentleman to believe that he had succeeded in deceiving him.

"A was jist offerin' Mr Poind a glaiss o' wine, Mr Sneaker," said Mrs M'Creesh; "help yersel'."

This time Sneaker turned his attention to the wine, as he felt that the brandy had slightly affected his head.

"Help yersel', Mr Poind," said the widow. "A think ma toothache's coming back wi' the damp graiss; a doot a'll hae tae tak' a drap o' brandy." So saying, she had again recourse to Mons. Martell.

"Hech! that's guid," she continued; "it warms a body, an' keeps doun the pain. Had ye ever the toothache, Mr Sneaker?"

"No, I never had."

"Ye'll maybe hae had the heartache, though!" she said slyly. "Hoo did ye lea a' the folks at Veto?"

"Oh, very well, indeed," simpered Sneaker.

"Hoo d'ye think the case is tae gae on? Mr Poind was tellin' me ye made a cawpital witness."

"Mr Poind, I should think, is the best judge of that," said Sneaker.

"An' hoo did ye leave Flora? A'm gled tae hear that ye're baith sae weel pleased wi' anither."

"If you mean Miss M'Corkscrew," said Sneaker, almost pale with suppressed emotion, "she was quite well when Mr Poind and I left; and Miss M'Philla-beg also. Mr Poind could, I daresay, tell you something interesting about her."

"Oh! ho!" said the widow.

Sneaker had divined at once that Poind had been trying to make the aunt believe that he and Miss M'Corkscrew were engaged, and he wished to have his revenge. Poind was not, however, to be done.

"I had a great flirtation with Miss M'Phillabeg," he said, boldly; "a very nice girl, indeed; but she's something in the same position as my friend here, she's engaged."

"Who told you, sir, that I was engaged?" said Sneaker, fiercely.

"Oh! all the world knows it; what's the use of getting angry about it? Miss M'Corkscrew is a very nice girl."



"I don't like to be annoyed about matters of that kind, Mr Poind, and you know that."

"Dinna cast oot aboot it, gentlemen! They say that women ay breeds mischief."

Sneaker felt that he had not the exact control of his temper. The combined effects of the chagrin he experienced at finding that his rival had been beforehand with him, and the stimulants he had taken had produced that result, so he tried to change the subject.

The conversation was carried on for some considerable time, Sneaker hoping that Poind would take himself off; but the latter was determined to sit out his rival,—he was not going to give him a chance on the present occasion, at least, of a *tête à tête*.

"Confound the fellow!" said Sneaker to himself; "he doesn't seem inclined to move."

At last, and only when good manners would not permit of him staying any longer, the rev. gentleman was reluctantly forced to rise, and say, "I'm afraid we are keeping you from other duties, Mrs M'Creesh."

"Oh no! a has been greatly enterteened wi' yer company, gentlemen."

Poind also rose, and both visitors, shaking their kind hostess warmly by the hand, took their leave.

"You go up to Glasgow, Mr Sneaker, I presume?"

"Yes."

"Well, I have to go further down the road to look at some other ground, so good bye."

This was only a ruse. Poind fancied that he had detected in Sneaker's look and manner a determination to have another talk with Mrs M'Creesh, and the thought struck him that he would probably find some excuse for going back again when he found the coast clear. To test this suspicion, he went down the road for about fifty or sixty yards, and when Sneaker was out of sight, he entered a beer-shop, from the window of which he could see any one coming in the opposite direction, and from which he had a full view of the entrance to Mrs M'Creesh's avenue. After waiting for about five minutes, he saw his rival returning. Poind immediately stepped out of the shop, and turned his back as if addressing some words to the man within. On looking round again, he saw Sneaker hastily retracing his steps to Glasgow, thinking, probably, that he had not been observed. Poind followed him up like a watchful shepherd, never losing sight of him until he saw him fairly into an omnibus, when he himself jumped into the next that came up, and soon found himself in his office in Glasgow, chuckling over the incidents of the day.

C H A P T E R X X V.

MOODY REFLECTIONS OF A DISAPPOINTED DIVINE—HOPE BEGINS TO DAWN—THE REV. MR SNEAKER SUDDENLY FINDS HIMSELF TRANSFORMED INTO A LION—FLAG OF THE CHURCH IN THE ASCENDANT—PRESBYTERY PRONOUNCE JUDGMENT AGAINST THE PRESENTEE—A FAITHLESS SWAIN AND DISCONSOLATE FAIR ONE—A TRIP TO EDINBURGH.

BAFFLED and dispirited, Sneaker sought his lodgings. It was evident that Poind had got the weather-gauge of him.

“The cursed imp!” he ejaculated, in the bitterness of his soul, “he has the advantage of me in worldly means. He has an income; I have none. In appearance he’s a guy, in manners a boor. I can sympathise with Mrs Anne Page when she exclaims—

‘Oh! what a world of vile ill-favoured faults
Looks handsome in three hundred pounds a year.’

But Mrs M’Creesh doesn’t require money, and I can hardly believe that she would prefer a scarecrow like Poind to me, if I had only the chance of making myself agreeable. Thank Heaven! the doctor has consented that I should preach for him on the after-

noon of Sabbath first, and she has accepted my aunt's invitation to tea."

He had found a note from his worthy aunt to this effect on his return.

"I shall try to see her home, and lose no chance of pressing my suit. Delays are dangerous. I ought to have called again sooner."

With these consolatory reflections, Sneaker took a stroll through the city to while away time that hung heavily on his hands.

Horn found Poind, on his return from Crossmungo, looking radiant with joy.

"Aha!" exclaimed the worthy senior, "if Dirlton were here, he would have no 'Doubts,' I think, that you had a satisfactory interview with the charming widow. Tell me how you got on."

Poind gave a graphic narrative of what took place.

"Delightful!" exclaimed Horn—"couldn't have been better managed. Mrs Horn will go down to-morrow and nail the matter at once. That fellow, Sneaker, however, is not to be despised, let me tell you. I was walking along with Dr Creed to-day, when he came up and spoke to him. It seems he's a nephew of the doctor's wife. He's a good-looking young fellow, and has the decided advantage of you so far as appearance goes, Poind; but never mind; the race, you know, is not always to the swift, nor

the battle to the strong. By the bye, when are the presbytery to give judgment in the Veto case?"

"The day after to-morrow."

"You will require to be present."

"Yes; I mean to leave by the last boat this evening. I haven't told you that I got an answer from my Veto flame."

"No; what does she say?"

"Oh, she respectfully declines my proposal."

"Well, then, you'll just have, in the words of the old song, to 'Wap at the widow, my laddie.'"

The day appointed by the presbytery for giving judgment had now arrived, and it, of course, behoved the procurators for both parties to be present. The muster of members was not so great as on former occasions, but there was a sufficient majority to carry the various deliverances which had been previously agreed upon. As usual, the church was well filled with spectators. One personage, however, was absent. The Rev. Mr Sneaker was not there. He had written a note to Miss M'Corkscrew stating that he was suffering from a bad cold, and was sorry he could not be present, but that he had no doubt everything would go right. The exemplary young man was, however, in robust health, devoting himself most assiduously to furthering his views with regard to Mrs M'Creesh. She had heard him preach, and he had seen her

home. His friends told him that he had made a capital appearance in the pulpit, a decided hit, and that all the young ladies of the congregation were making enquiries about him.

When it became known that Sneaker was related to Dr Creed, there was an unmistakable run made upon the young and interesting divine, who felt himself in the position of the fortunate individual of whom it is said, that on awaking, one fine morning, he found that he had suddenly become famous. He was invited to dinner here, to tea there; was asked to read at Dorcas reunions, to speak at soirées, or, as Mrs Pry called them, *sorees*, and at meetings in connection with the "Cowcaddens Shoe-blacks' Soda Scone and Cookie Association,"—the Camlachie branch of "The Society for the Diffusion of Christmas Porridge"—"The Religious Quack Society," and several other highly useful institutions, which nowhere flourish so pruriently as in the important city of St Mungo. In short, he was on the highway to the eminent position of being one of the standing orators of the civic feasts and social gatherings of that great emporium of commerce. He looked forward to the day when he might be found as indispensable as a certain worthy baronet of historical fame had became to the magistrates and council, when they succeeded in luring a good-natured Prince,

or a too-confiding Duke, into an acceptance of the heavy hospitalities of the City Hall or Corporation Galleries. How pleasant it would be for Sneaker to reflect, when the long fished-for knighthood came at last to the chief magistrate, for the time being, that he too, had been instrumental in having that honour bestowed upon the eminent soft goods-man, who, as a partner of the well-known firm of Messrs Macandoo and Clappiton, possessed the distinguished merit of having realized a fortune! He reasoned justly that it was a natural deduction from the celebrated motto on the city arms that its material interests should be promoted by the clergy.—“LET GLASGOW FLOURISH BY THE PREACHING OF THE WORD.”—What a noble inducement for a zealous minister! and what clearer evidence of material prosperity, than to find its civic rulers so frequently the recipients of Royal favour?—so frequently, indeed, that the good citizens, when they hear of a public feast, or a statue being suggested, or some additional invitation proposed to be forced upon Royalty, are tempted to exclaim, with the incorrigible litigant, who saw the glance of a sheriff-officer in every stranger’s eye—“At wha’s suit noo?”

Such were a few of the pleasing reflections of Mr Sneaker. *Allons, courage mon enfant! Tout vient à bout à qui sait attendre.* The honours of Glasgow are

not all stationary. Your time will come. He could not, however, avoid envying the well-won and gracefully-worn laurels of its veteran legal orator, nor thine, O heterodox Prince of jolly priests ! of whom we may say (*mutatis mutandis*) as Juvenal says of Montanus,

" Nulli major fuit usus edendi,
Tempestate mea. Mullæ nata forent, an
Morvinum ad Saxum, Funerinove edita fundo
Ostrea, callebat primo deprendere morsu ;
Et semel aspecti littus dicebat echini."

Sneaker longed for an opportunity of distinguishing himself, by taking part in the proceedings of a society which had been recently formed in the western capital, for "Promoting the cerebral development of the incaudiculated Pongos of Borneo, in order to test the soundness of the Darwinian Theory of the Origin of Species." With regard to this subject, he had been thinking of a plan by which they might be taught to read upon a principle somewhat analogous to that employed in the education of the deaf and dumb. He had also been speculating upon the propriety of organizing a deputation to be sent to the Hau Haus of New Zealand, to reconvert them from anthropophagy and Pai-Marirism, with special reference to the alarming inclination which they had

recently manifested, to indulge in cold missionary and Chili peppers. But we must leave the rev. gentleman in the meantime, to mature his meritorious projects, and follow the vicissitudes of the Veto case :—

The proceedings of the presbytery were, as usual, opened with prayer. The audience thought they could discern, in the lugubrious expression of the Moderator's face, and the funereal tones of his voice, that he felt himself pretty much in the position of one who was taking part in the services preliminary to the execution of some unhappy criminal. There was not much doubt as to how the presbytery would act ; but hope sometimes lingers even upon the drop, and there were doubtless people who thought that, after the evidence which had been led in refutation of the objections and in favour of the presentee's qualifications, as well as the fact of the great body of the people being in his favour, the presbytery could hardly venture to find them proved. These persons were happily ignorant of the materials of which the courts of the church are composed. At all events their expectations were very soon disappointed.

The following is the minute of this memorable meeting :—

At VETO, and within the Parish Church
there, this — day of — 18—.

The presbytery of Dunderhead having met, conform to appointment, was constituted. The Rev. Thomas M'Slykey, Greetknowe, Moderator.—Sederunt—Rev. Dr Pompeius Brower, Blairorgan; Rev. Alister M'Cringer, Ochonochree; Rev. Teevish M'Sneevish, Sneeshan; Rev. Lauchlan Mackintrowsers, Lochabernomore; Rev. Ebenezer Sneckdraw, Brose Athol; Rev. Havral Clash, Clavers; Rev. Inkhorn Skirleywhitter, Clerk of Presbytery.

Alister Fillyerglass and Maccullamore Quaighhorn, elders.

There appeared for the presentee, Gabby Garrempay, Esq., S.S.C., Edinburgh; and for the objectors, Sharper Poind, Esq., writer, Glasgow.

The minutes of last meeting were read and approved of. The Procurator for the objectors stated that he abandoned the fifth objection. Parties being removed, the presbytery proceeded to give judgment in the Veto case.

It was moved by the Rev. Mr M'Cringer, and seconded by the Rev. Mr Sneckdraw, and agreed to, that the presbytery find the first, third, sixth, seventh, and eighth objections wholly proven. Rev. Dr Brower dissenting.

Parties being called in, and the judgment being

intimated to them, the Procurator for the presentee protested and appealed to the ensuing meeting of the General Assembly, for reasons to be given in due time, took instruments, and craved extracts, which were allowed. The Procurator for the objectors acquiesced, took instruments, and craved extracts, which were also allowed.

It was moved by the Rev. Havral Clash, and seconded by the Rev. Teevish M'Sneevish, and agreed to, that the second objection, having been found irrelevant, and inadmissible to probation, has not been proven.

The judgment having been intimated, was acquiesced in, protested, and appealed by the parties for their respective interests *ut supra*.

It was moved by the Rev. Alister M'Cringer, and seconded by Mr Macculamore Quaighhorn, elder, that the presbytery find the fourth objection proven, except in so far as regards the presentee's red hair, which had previously been found to be irrelevant. The Rev. Dr Brower dissenting, in so far as the objection is found to be proven.

Protested, appealed, and acquiesced in *ut supra* by both parties, so far as favourable or adverse to them.

It was moved by the Rev. Alister M'Cringer, and seconded by the Rev. Havral Clash, that, in respect of the objections found proven *ut supra*, the presby-

tery find that the Rev. Fergus Ochertyre is not a qualified and suitable person for the functions of the ministry in the parish of Veto, and ought not to be settled therein, and refuse to proceed with his settlement as minister thereof, and instruct the clerk to intimate this deliverance to the patron.

It was moved by the Rev. Dr Brower that the presbytery dismiss the objections, sustain the call, and resolve to proceed with the settlement of the presentee according to the laws of the church; but this motion fell, from not being seconded.

The presbytery accordingly found and issued their deliverance in terms of the said first motion.

Dr Brower dissented, and protested for leave to complain to the ensuing meeting of the General Assembly, took instruments, and craved extracts, which were allowed, he promising to give in reasons in due time.

The judgment was protested and appealed against for the presentee, and acquiesced in for the objectors *ut supra*.

The presbytery appointed the Rev. Alister McCringer and the Rev. Havral Clash, commissioners from the presbytery to the ensuing meeting of the General Assembly, to defend the judgment.

Closed with prayer.

(Signed) T. M'SLYKEY, Moderator.

"The amen" had hardly died away upon the lips of the moderator, when loud and prolonged hisses, mingled with groans, resounded through the church; and the audience, with the exception of a few of the objectors, left the building. The presentee departed alone, remembering the command given to the apostles—"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet." Huistan was the last to leave, but he did not go without speaking out his mind.

"Ye hae dune yer warst, M'Cringer, this day, an' a' the rest o' ye," he said, bitterly. "Ye hae keepit oot a better man than the haill o' ye pit thegither; but we're no dune wi' ye yet."

A hollow laugh from Sheepshanks and others, was the only answer to Huistan's menace. They were pretty sure, however, that it would not be his fault if it were not carried out.

Thus was the Veto case disposed of by the presbytery of Dunderhead; but the end was not yet. It was well-known that the presentee had not the means himself of carrying the case to the Assembly, and the objectors had calculated that if they succeeded in getting the presbytery to decide against him, he would be deterred from proceeding further; but they had not taken into account the spirit and determina-

tion of the people, the sympathy of friends, nor the generous impulse which frequently prompts members of the legal profession to exertions on behalf of ill-used and unfortunate clients, and, in the interest of justice and humanity, to risk at once their labour and even money advances. There are some who, narrow-minded and selfish themselves, will smile incredulously at the bare idea of a disinterested or generous lawyer. We would ask such if they can point to any other profession that has fought more nobly or more devotedly for civil and religious freedom, whether invaded by crowned monarch or mitred churchman ?

It was determined that the case should be taken to the Assembly, and the necessary arrangements were at once made for that purpose. Sneaker, as we have seen, had become a lion in the good city of St Mungo. He was duly advised by the faithful Flora of the result of the Veto case; but the parish had now comparatively few charms for one who flattered himself that he was in the fair way of securing an infinitely more desirable prize. He kept up a correspondence with her, it is true, but every letter seemed to the sensitive Miss M'Corkscrew colder than the preceding. Rumours reached her ears, as they will always reach distrusting fair ones, which painfully impressed her with the conviction that Sneaker's love

was rapidly on the wane. Consultations with her cousin became more and more frequent.

One morning the lively Helen was grieved to find her despairing cousin in tears, sitting upon that sofa where she and Sneaker had so often sat talking of love, poetry, and romance.

"What's the matter, my dear Flora?" asked the kind-hearted Miss M'Phillabeg.

"They're gone!" replied her cousin, faintly.

"Who are gone, dearest Flora?"

"The doves," replied the afflicted young lady, with a sigh. "They too, have forsaken me. I ought to have expected it," she added, musingly, "since they were his gift!"

"Dear, me!" said Helen, tenderly, "is it so?"

"Yes; I've missed them now for two days."

"But they'll perhaps come back again," answered Helen, and the light-hearted creature began to sing,

"Will ye no come back again?"

"Don't, don't! Helen, don't sing that song; you'll break my heart if you do."

"Do forgive me, Flora. I never thought of paining you. Come, do cheer up! there's as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it!"

"What's this?" she continued, pointing to a sheet of paper. "Is it a letter?"

"No, Helen ; letters are now to me like angels' visits, few and far between. It's only some lines I was trying to write about my doves, to ease my heart."

"May I read them ?"

"Do. Read them aloud, it will be more soothing to me than your song."

Miss M'Phillabeg accordingly read the following simple lines, entitled,

THE DOVES.

A pair of doves, whose peaceful lot,
Was cast by Fate, in one dove cot ;
Within a garden bright and fair,
'Mid spreading trees and bushes rare,
Had been since little ones they were,
The objects both of Flora's care.

Two doves they were of pinion light,
Of lovely form and plumage bright,
Their eyes with brilliant radiance shone,
And to eclipse them there were none.
Their little cot, their youthful home,
To them a cot of love had grown.

For there at eve, these happy doves,
Could tell their joys, repeat their loves.
A pleasant thing it was to hear,
The tender sounds which struck the ear,
While one his partner gently woo'd,
And while the other sweetly coo'd.

And from their cot, their early home,
They very rarely far did roam.
But in the fields they might be seen,
Or flitting o'er the village green.
Yet ere the bells for vespers ring,
Homeward they sped on joyous wing ;
And thus they passed the happy day,
Nor thought of higher joys had they.
But still, alas ! the wisest plan
That e'er was formed for doves or man,
By discontentment may be spoiled,
And all its good intentions foiled.
One day when all was bright and fair,
And odours sweet perfumed the air,
Our dove flew by his partner's side,
And thus addressed his modest bride —
“ ‘Tis hard that from this little spot,
In which is placed our humble cot,
We may not long away abide,
But must return at evening tide.
Come ! let us leave this garden fair,
Our joyous course wing through the air ;
We'll pass the meadows, seek the hills,
And bathe ouselves in murmuring rills,
And midst yon blooming foliage rest,
And build ourselves a little nest,
Where peacefully we may reside,
And we *wont* return at evening tide.”
His partner heard his cunning strain
At first with mingled shame and pain,

'Twere black ingratitude to try,
From Flora's kindness thus to fly.
But love, alas ! with doves as men,
Yields oft to thoughts our hearts condemn ;
But which, if duty held her sway,
The heart would spurn with scorn away.
So on that bright and lovely day,
They left their cot and flew away ;
And Flora now is left alone,
To mourn her pets—her favourites gone !

"Not alone, dear Flora," exclaimed Helen, with real affection beaming in her eye. "If they've all deserted you, I, at least, wont."

"Thank you, dearest," said her cousin, warmly pressing her hand, and apparently with a somewhat lighter heart. I daresay I may get over it, but it's a cruel stroke to lose all at once."

"I am not so sure about that. The *doos*," she added, with a lively air, are just as well away too."

She might have added as Huistan did, when he heard of the circumstance, that "It was jist a case o' *do* frae the beginnin'," but she didn't.

At last, Miss M'Phillabeg, who knew more than she liked previously to communicate to her unhappy cousin, thought it necessary to be candid, and to tell her that she did not believe that Sneaker ever entertained any real affection for her—that, on the contrary, his

motives had been eminently selfish and mercenary, and that he was now actually paying attention to other parties. She did not tell her, however, that her own aunt was the cynosure of Sneaker's regards. Miss M'Corkscrew could not at first realize the situation ; but gradually Sneaker's baseness appeared to her in its true light. His letters grew colder and colder, and at last they ceased altogether. On the other hand, his attentions to the widow were redoubled. He managed to procure an introduction to the parish minister of Crossmungo, an old and frail bachelor, who was thankful to get assistance occasionally. Sneaker volunteered to supply his pulpit, to enable him to go to the coast, for a month or two, for change of air. The offer was gladly accepted, and Sneaker found himself snugly installed in the manse. It is needless to say to what particular part of the neighbourhood his footsteps were most frequently directed. Poind found that his rival had almost taken permanent possession of the widow M'Creesh and her establishment. When he called, Sneaker was sure to be there, and the negotiations with regard to the proposed feu were in consequence prolonged *ad Græcas Kalendas*. Poind had great faith in the diplomatic ability of Mrs Horn, but then, he found that she was checkmated by the superior tactics or advantages of Mrs Dr Creed.

The widow had been several times at parties in the houses of both, and she was not stingy in the matter of giving returns. The probabilities were, however, all in favour of Sneaker, when the day of meeting of the General Assembly arrived. In short, it was believed, in well-informed circles, that his marriage with the wealthy widow was fixed to take place in a few weeks. Poind, of course, heard these rumours, which were considerably strengthened by the fact of Mrs M'Creesh having intimated that she did not intend to make one of the party formed for the purpose of going in to Edinburgh.

Poind was visibly affected by the turn matters seemed to be taking. Some people went even the length of saying that he was a shade thinner than formerly, but others maintained that degrees of thinness were necessarily imperceptible in a man who was at best only "as fat as a hatchet."

The Veto case was set down for the third day after the meeting of the Assembly. It was the only case of a contested settlement that year, and, of course, created a good deal of interest. The facts and circumstances connected with it were generally known, and it was understood that the printed case had been pretty carefully read and discussed by the members. Let it not be supposed, however, that many of those by whose suffrages the questions that come before this

ecclesiastical court of last resort are decided, vote according to their own independent opinions. Most of them are influenced by the views of particular leaders, and by pressure put upon them from considerations wide of the merits of the case they are called upon to determine; and so it is that the decisions are so wavering and uncertain, that no one can, in any case, form a reasonable conjecture with regard to its result. The Assembly had rejected and ruined a succession of presentees, against whom the objections stated were not only trivial but clearly disproved, because it was alleged that the people would leave the church should they be inducted. Then they admitted persons to whom there were good and valid objections, frightened by assertions that the frequent rejection of presentees would prevent men of energy and talent from devoting themselves to the ministry. Thus they went now in one direction, now in another, according as for the moment they considered most the interests of the minister or those of the congregation, just as in a certain Greek dance, the parties having danced a certain number of steps forward danced an equal number back again! Never judging a case upon its own merits, but influenced by fears from within or rumours from without, while trying to do what was most for the good of the church, they alternately sacrificed good

and deserving men to mere clamour or caprice, and thrust indifferent and incapable ministers upon congregations conscientiously opposed to them.

It must ever be thus, so long at least as church patronage exists in Scotland. Whatever apology could have been made for that system at a time when such patrons as the nobility and landed gentry really belonged to the church, there can be no apology for it now—not even for the patronage of the crown. With very few exceptions the Scottish nobles have left the Church of Scotland and have become Episcopalians. It is a fact always to be deplored, when the nobility of a country deserts the national church; but it depends upon the church itself whether it is a fact to be deplored for the church, or for the nobility. Provided the Church of Scotland can retain the affection and regard of the people, she may mourn, but she need not despair, for the loss of the aristocracy. The loss would not be perhaps of so much significance even to that body themselves, had they remained faithful to the true doctrines and sound teaching of the church they went to; but the old nobility, like some birds of passage, seem to make the Church of England merely a resting place before taking their final flight for the warmer regions of Rome. We do not pretend to second sight, nor to the gift of prophecy, but we believe we have not

read history in vain, and that we have made no indifferent study of men, manners, and religion, as they now exist over the world. We only state, therefore, our own personal conviction, when we say, that this increasing migration to Rome is but the prelude to the destruction of the old nobility. How, or why, or when this will be so, it is not necessary that we should discuss here. Arts and science, law and learning, may die, since Lord John Manners has given them permission so to do; but while it is only justice to say that they have been all more or less indebted to the old nobility, they will most certainly survive their patrons if the latter continue in their present course.

But while we believe these things, we also believe that unless the Church of Scotland looks well to herself, there are within her own bosom the elements of destruction also. It is absolutely necessary for her salvation that she should get quit of her present position with the State—above all, that she should be done with this accursed system of patronage, and her scandalous ecclesiastical procedure, which is its undoubted offspring. So long as it exists, she may, indeed, be called the Church of Scotland; but she cannot be called THE CHURCH OF CHRIST. This is a time which is to test the soundness, the faith, and constancy of all the churches. They will be tried and searched by fire. The purer they

can go into it, the quicker and the purer will they come out of it.

If you try the Church of Scotland now by the test of the state of the Church as left by Christ, and as administered by the apostles, how will it stand? Do we find that the right to present an apostle to the saints, say in Antioch, was vested in the Roman Cæsar, or in any of his pro-consuls, with a right merely in the congregation of stating objections to a presentee before the bishop and deacons, supported by the eloquence of the orator Tortullus; while some orator equally eminent defended the presentation of the patron, Cæsar, and the rights of his presentee? Could you witness a huge law-plea carried on for months, to the scandal of the whole City of Antioch, of the whole Seven Churches of Asia, and the whole country round about Judea, maintained, it might be, by bribery, corruption, intimidation, and treating, just as we are now hearing of in parliamentary elections; and where both parties, the saints at Antioch, and the opposed apostle, had to disburse in law expenses thousands of sesterces, before it could be decided whether or not, he should be allowed to preach the gospel of Christ to a reclaiming congregation? Yet, this is exactly the state of the Church of Scotland at the present day. Can that be called the Church of Christ?

Let us not, however, be misunderstood. We don't say that the Church of Scotland is not the Church of Christ. What we say is, that she is the Church of Christ plus things which ought not to be there—just as we would say that the Church of England and the Church of Rome are the Churches of Christ, plus many things a great deal worse than any thing which exists in the Church of Scotland.

We are too far separated from the Church of Rome to refer to her in any particular degree here, for her system has been, is now, and always will be, antagonistic to human progress, and moral and religious freedom; when it ceases to be so, there will be no Church of Rome. But while we grieve for the church of our native land, we mourn for the Church of England—betrayed by friends and assailed by foes—torn and bleeding, she seems to be given over to the schemes of the spoiler! She is cursed with the weight of rich temporalities, and is suffocating in the close embraces of the State! Her bishops are rolling in wealth—her curates wallowing in poverty. SIMONY is painted on the doors of her chapels, and ADVOWSONS on placards at the entrances of auction rooms! Rottenness and schism within, rebellion and secession without—to what pool will she go to cleanse herself from pollution?

We are of those who still cling to the Church of
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Scotland, not that we think she is better than all the other churches, but because she is the church of our fathers, and possesses, as we believe, the essential elements of good within her pale ; and because we think it would be cowardly to desert her, so long as there is hope of keeping her afloat, and towing her into a harbour of safety. We have had opportunities of seeing the working of her ecclesiastical system previous to, and since 1843—opportunities such as few men of our years have had, and consequently all its hideousness and deformity have been long and often before our eyes. We have endeavoured to portray it so as to give a faithful picture of the practical working of the measure called Lord Aberdeen's Act, as we ourselves have found it—a picture which will be recognized as genuine by those who know most about it. We hope it may help to rouse the church out of its lethargy, even though we ourselves should not escape the wrath and obloquy of optimists, who hate none so heartily as those who disturb their peaceful slumbers. But let them listen to other sounds of warning, if not to ours. There are not wanting sounds and signs, if they will only watch for them.

**He that hath an ear
Let him hear
What the Spirit saith
To the Churches.**

But let us follow the further outs and ins of the Veto case.

The party which Mrs Horn had organized to go to Edinburgh, though it did not count Mrs M'Creesh among its numbers, had not fallen through. There was a respectable muster of western folks got up for the occasion. Strange to say, many of these individuals had never seen the capital of their country before, and had very hazy ideas as to the constitution and functions of the Assembly. Several (clients of Messrs Horn and Poind) were well-to-do cheese-mongers, pawnbrokers, shopkeepers, and publicans, with their wives and daughters, whom Mrs M'Creesh probably did not care about meeting; but Mrs Horn determined to carry out the original plan of seeing, not merely the Assembly, and the other sights of Edinburgh, but of picnicking among the sylvan shades of Roslin and Hawthornden. It had been proposed that the parties from Veto and Glasgow should unite, but the defection of Mrs M'Creesh, the connecting link between the two, destroyed this project. Messrs Puncheon, Sheepshanks, Stirk, Porter, and others, accompanied by Miss M'Corkscrew, and Miss M'Phillabeg, therefore, found their way to Edinburgh by themselves. The only representative of the presentee's supporters who could afford to indulge in the luxury of a summer jaunt of

this kind, was our friend, Mr Huistan M'Huistan, who was determined, at once to gratify two objects, viz., to see the capital, and the end of the Veto case. Dr Creed, although not a member of the Assembly of that year, had been prevailed upon by his wife, to take a trip to the east—that worthy lady having a laudable desire to revisit, in a new character, the hospitable mansion where she had formerly reigned supreme as house-keeper. Sneaker accompanied them, after having tried in vain to persuade Mrs M'Creesh to become one of the party. We shall leave these pleasure-seekers, in the meantime, to enjoy themselves according to their various inclinations.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MEETING OF ASSEMBLY—ECCLESIASTICAL RENDEZVOUS—JOVIAL DOINGS AT “THE SHIP”—HOW MEMBERS ARE CANVASSED—EVENING SEDERUNT—“THE VETO CASE” COMES ON—SPEECHES OF COUNSEL—THE REV. MR M'CRINGER MAKES A MULL OF IT—THE OBJECTORS AND PRESBYTERY OF DUUNDERHEAD DEFEATED—SCENES IN THE HALL—EXEUNT OMNES—CONCLUSION.

THE period from the opening of the Assembly to the day fixed for the hearing of a *Cause Célèbre* like the Veto case, is a very busy and anxious one for the law agents engaged in it. They have not only to attend long and frequent consultations with counsel, but to organize and superintend a working committee of ministers, elders, and others, disposed to lend assistance in canvassing. They require to see such leaders of the Assembly as sympathise with their cause, and to “coach” them up in the merits of the case. They must be on the alert to catch any prejudicial rumours put in circulation by their opponents, and to give them a prompt contradiction. They have perhaps to secure the interest of some influential journal, and to prompt a racy leader to appear on the day when the case comes on. The Rev.

Dougal Trotternish, of Benbecula, and the Rev. Magnus Troil, of Longhope, must be kept to their promise of watching the Granton steamers for the contingent of black coats from the north—so long at least as that route is not superseded by rail. The individuals who have promised to give a good account of the rev. presbyters and elders of the east, west, and south, ought also to be frequently seen and encouraged to energetic action. The resident elders in Edinburgh of remote presbyteries, many of whom are professional men, require to be canvassed, and their influence, if possible, secured. Even those knights of the thimble who are *par excellence*, tailors and clothiers to the clergy, are enlisted on the one side or the other, as their emporiums are sure to be visited by members requiring to replenish their wardrobes. We have known a zealous snip who secured an incredibly large number of votes for a favourite presentee, but it is right to add that a good many of the voters were pretty deep in his ledger. After getting through the labour of consultation, the agent has probably to rush away to the Assembly—to make his rounds, and endeavour, by hook or by crook, to secure additional support—then he will have to hurry away to the “Ship,” the “Regent,” or the “Waterloo,” or wherever else head-quarters may be, to report progress, and to receive the communications of the

various canvassers and scouts. Lists of the members of Assembly are, for the fiftieth time, gone carefully over—those favourable, are again checked off, as well as those unfavourable, and those still to be seen. One reports that the provost of Pukeshaws is to use his influence with his civic brother of Creeshmalof, both of whom are probably keen churchmen, and, as worthy elders ought to do, take a warm interest in things spiritual. So long as the case is on the *tapis* there is a tide of drouthy sympathisers in black coats and white chokers, flowing into, and ebbing from, head-quarters. You never find the committee room vacant, nor the bottles empty. The apartment is redolent of the combined smell of every description of tobacco, and all kinds of liquor, while the floor presents the appearance of a grand and universal spittoon. The conversation is, of course, special. One peaky faced individual, in green spectacles, informs the company that the Rev. Dorsal Fin, of Callereels, is to go dead against the presentee, and is expected to make a slashing speech.

"I hope he'll flounder in it," observes a witty ecclesiastic from Fisherrow.

"We must get Greyfriar to tickle his gills," says another.

"If we do, Master Fin will probably catch a crab!" ejaculates an individual with a long clay pipe.

"By the bye," mutters somebody with a strong Aberdonian accent, "has any one seen Peery or Bourtrie?"

"Yes," answers another, with, if possible, a more strongly marked Bon-Accord twang. "They're too cautious to say much, but won't go against us at all events. Of course, Duddingstone and St Stephens will favour the objectors."

"No doubt of it," observes he with the barnacles.

"Will Ellon speak?" asks one who had come through the fire himself. "He helped me to pull through. I would have been cast but for him."

"I understand he won't interfere," replies some individual who cannot be seen, so enveloped is he *in nubibus*. "He's afraid of his Schemes in certain quarters."

So the talk goes on from day to day, and so the glasses go round, while pipes and cigars emit volumes of smoke almost until the hour fixed for the case coming on.

So long as it lasts, the work of the law-agent is incessant and harassing. The labour of the Whips of the House of Commons is pretty hard at times, but not so hard as the Whips of the General Assembly. The business of the former is to collect regularly organised forces, that of the latter is first to create supporters, and then to bring them to the

scratch. All this work besides, and much more, must be concentrated into the period of a few days.

Garrempey, it is needless to say, had a busy time of it, but he was thoroughly up to his business. A veteran in church cases, he knew every dodge which could possibly be resorted to by his adversaries, and was ready to meet, and prompt to defeat it. Huistan accompanied him wherever he went. He was anxious to hear and see everything that was said and done, and would not have missed being present at the "trial," as he called it, for the best pair of bullocks in his stock. He was at all the consultations, and came away therefrom, and especially from a *séance* in the Parliament House, profoundly impressed with the wisdom that lurketh under a legal wig.

"Hoo d'ye think the case'll go noo, Mr Garrempey?" he asked, as they returned from the last consultation.

"Oh, I am pretty sanguine, Mr M'Huistan, although counsel are not. You heard what Mr Parsons Dodge said? It'll be a toss up."

"Ye dinna mean tae say that they'll toss up for't?"

"Not exactly," said Garrempey, smiling; "but they think it's just a mere chance."

"Ou ay," replied Huistan; "but a' things depend on chance, ye ken."

"Yes; but you don't know the Assembly, and they do. Different men come up every year. It doesn't much signify what the merits of the case are, but it matters a vast deal what the composition of the Assembly is. I think it's a good one for us this year. I have gone carefully over the lists, and I think we ought to carry our man."

"D'ye tell me sae?" said Huistan, grasping his hand. "Man, a wad gie a score o' ma best tups tae see hoo Puncheon and his freens wud look if we win the cause!"

"Have you seen anything of them?"

"Ou ay; they're a' leeving at the Royal Hotel. Set them up! But I haenna seen that fallow Sneaker wi' them. A hae met them twa three times at the Castle an' at Holyrood, but he wasna amang them."

"That's strange. He used to be a regular attendant at all the meetings in Veto."

"A heerd something when a was leeving hame, tae the effec' that there was a quarrel atween him and Miss M'Corkscrew."

"There's that wasp, M'Cringer," he continued, as that gentleman and his brother commissioner from the presbytery of Dunderhead passed.

"He's been gaun' aboot like an evil speerit amang the clergy, trying tae pooshion their minds agin the presentee. A heerd him mysel' tellin some

fearfu' stories tae the minister o' Glengruel. His back was tae me, and we were a' jammed wi' the crood. A couldna staun't ony langer, sae a said it was a' lees. He turned roon whan he heerd ma voice, and gied a bit start, but he didna speak. A kent the Rev. Mr Bannock langsyne. Mony a stirk a bocht frae him; so he lauched, and said, 'A see, Huistan, you and Mr M'Cringer's no sic guid freens as ye uised tae be. A hae read the Veto case, an' a think puir Ochtertyre has been verra ill-uised.'

"Man," continued Huistan, "it wud hae done yer heart guid tae see the wey M'Cringer drew aff—jist like a colley wi' his tail atween his legs."

"Mr Bannock speered at me, if a kent whaur the presentee was to be foond, as he wished tae see him. He said they were at the Ha' thegither; sae a took him straucht tae the 'Ship.' They beat a', thae clergy, for smokin' pipes, an' drinkin' yill. Some o' them," he added, "can tak' a guid sloch o' whuskey tae! Ye couldna tell wha was there for the cloods o' tobacco smoke. Ye wud maist need tae hae a pocket bellows wi' ye, tae blaw awa' the reek frae their faces, that ye micht hae a fair chaunce o' kenning freens frae strangers."

"I know it all, Mr M'Huistan," said Garrempey, smiling. "I have seen some queer things in my time, among the ministers during the sitting of the

Assembly, but after all, what's about it? The poor fellows have only the chance once a year, and I think they're quite right to enjoy themselves. They're away from home, and meet with old college companions, and other friends, whom they have not perhaps seen nor heard of for years. They would be more than mortals if they could not unbend and enjoy themselves over a pipe and a social glass, while talking of the days of their youth—of early struggles and hard-won success—of the friends who are gone, and changes that have taken place since they entered upon the rugged path of life."

"Ou! a hae naething tae say agin it at a', Mr Garrempey. A like tae see ministers enjoy theirsels like ither folk, if they dae't in moderation, ye ken; but a can tell ye, a hae seen some o' them sin a cam' here, wha didna jist luk tae me as if they'd been verra sparin' o' the Lord High Commissioner's wine an' toddy."

"Come, come! Mr M'Huistan, ye mustn't run down the auld kirk that way. How d'ye know that they were ministers at all?"

"There's nae doot o' that, ye ken. They had thae white neck-cloths, and black claes on."

"Hoots, man! it would just be some of these Free Kirk or U.P. elders. They all wear white ties. They would be dour lookin' fellows, I have no doubt?"

"Weel, they were jist that," said Huistan.

"And, besides," said Garrempey, with a grin, "did you not know that they're notoriously fond of fish dinners, at Lucky Clark's, where we were the other day, and that they drink any quantity of Burnt-island whisky?"

"Is that a fac'?" said Huistan! "It'll be jist some o' thae chaps that a see'd, for it was frae that direckshun that a saw them comin' stoiterin' intil the toon, in the gloamin'."

"It's an awfu' expense tae keep open hoose at the 'Ship,' for a' the ministers an' itheris that come back and forrit."

"Can't be helped," said Garrempey. "Must have committee rooms."

"An a wee drap tae weet yer whussells wi'."

"There's not much done here now without it. It's all eating and drinking together, from the Lord High Commissioner's dinners, to the humble beef-steak and potatoes in the Flesh Market Close.

"But I shall have to leave you for a few hours, Mr M'Huistan. Step up to the Assembly, and I shall see you on my return."

Messrs Horn and Poind were working with might and main. They had agents in Edinburgh to assist them, but being unaccustomed to the peculiar working of church cases they were left far behind by

their opponent. What they wanted, however, in experience, they supplied in energy and watchfulness. They were to be found in the hall, in the lobbies, on the stairs—outside and inside of the railings—now pouncing upon one member, anon, holding another by the button-hole—pouring into his ear facts and statements by the yard. The whole affair resembled nothing so much as what one sees taking place in the lobbies of the House of Commons, when some important bill, affecting class interests, is being discussed, where members are dogged, waylaid, detained, and entreated to support a modification of one clause, or to oppose another. The difference, however, and it is a very material one, is, that in the one house they are engaged in making laws, while in the other, they are supposed to be only administering them. While, therefore, canvassing may be excusable in the one case, it can never be justified where parties are sitting, not as legislators, but as judges. Yet it is notorious that in the General Assembly the result of a disputed case of settlement is always more or less affected by keen, incessant, and systematic canvassing—not merely by the agents, but by the members of Assembly themselves.

The objectors had their head quarters at the “Regent,” and thither they repaired to have their

final meeting on the evening previous to the case coming on."

"What news, Mr Poind?" said Sheepshanks.

"We had a long consultation to-day with counsel. I believe the Procurator for the church is with us. One of our counsel learned as much in the Parliament House. He will make a speech, of course, which will help us considerably."

"I have heard," said Puncheon, "that the Assembly isn't swayed very much by what he says."

"Who told you that?" said Poind, sharply.

"Well, I met a young friend, who is an advocate, and he told me he had heard that the Procurator was rather in favour of the presentee, but he said that the Assembly were always jealous of lawyers, and made a point pretty often of doing exactly the reverse of what the Procurator urged them to do."

"Your friend must be a very young advocate, indeed," said Poind, sneeringly. "I should think our counsel ought to know better than he can possibly do."

"Well, I hope so. I can't make out," he continued, "what has become of Mr Sneaker. I have not seen him anywhere. I found he had left his card at our hotel before we came to Edinburgh, but he has not called since."

"I saw him yesterday," said Poind, "in the Assembly, in a corner of the students' gallery."

"I can't understand it," said Puncheon.

"He has other fish to fry," said Poind, quietly drawing Puncheon aside.

"What do you mean, Mr Poind?"

"Well, Mr Puncheon, I think it my duty to tell you some circumstances which will both astonish and grieve you." Poind then proceeded to inform Mr Puncheon of the designs which Sneaker had in view, at first with regard to Miss M'Corkscrew and afterwards as to her aunt.

"You certainly astonish me, Mr Poind. Why, I saw Mrs M'Creesh yesterday in Princes Street. She spoke about Flora and Mr Sneaker as being engaged persons in exceedingly kind terms, and hinted as much as that she intended to give her a handsome *tocher*. She promised to call upon me either here or on my return to Glasgow, to arrange about it."

Poind was thunderstruck. He looked upon the statement as a mere ruse of the widow, and had no doubt that Sneaker had managed to get her to come into Edinburgh along with his aunt, and that he was keeping out of the way of his Veto friends in consequence.

"Did she tell you where she lived?" said Poind, eagerly.

"Yes. She's staying in Queen Street. Here's the address. I must look into this matter, at once," he said, as he left the meeting. "I shall see Flora immediately."

The eventful day at last arrived which was to decide the fate of the presentee. The case was to be taken up at three o'clock P.M. At that time the hall was pretty well filled. The Lord High Commissioner was in his seat, surrounded by the youth and beauty of the Scottish Capital. Gay uniforms, mingled with the light and airy dresses of fashionable belles, while a sea of heads, many of them bald and reverend, wagging above black coats and white neckties, filled the area and side seats. Students mustered in considerable force—sympathisers, as they generally are, with unfortunate presentees. Counsel occupied a whole seat, and the line of white wigs offered a pleasing contrast to the all-pervading black. The agents and commissioners from the presbytery and clerks occupied the seat immediately behind the counsel. Garrempey was sitting on the left of the Rev. Mr M'Cringer, while Mr Havral Clash was on the right of his reverend brother. The proceedings were opened in a very able speech by one of the junior counsel for the presentee. He went fully over the case, but not so much so as not to leave a good deal for his senior to say when

the proper time came. The juniors occupied the court until it was time

“For venerable clerks to hear the chime
That calls the saints from holy work to dine.”

The case was therefore adjourned till the evening sederunt.

The junior counsel resumed their arguments to a house which was not quite so full as when the case began. Many of the members were still stretching their legs under the hospitable mahogany of the Lord High Commissioner, or enjoying themselves at private parties, and it was pretty late in the evening before they found their way up the High Street. The Hall then began to fill rapidly. The junior counsel for the objectors was still upon his legs. Before he had concluded, the house was completely crowded. Members appeared to be in excellent good humour. Faces that had looked pale and careworn during the day were now glistening with a roseate hue and beaming expression. There is virtue in a good dinner and generous wine.

“Good house,” whispered Garrempey to his senior counsel, Dodge.

“Rather. Who’s to make our motion?”

“Greyfriar.”

"And the seconder?"

"Peery."

"Good. How's Fin?"

"Dead against."

"Hum—and Holland Rill?"

"Ditto. But I have secured Bourtree and Bulloch."

"Good again. What about Ellon?"

"Wont interfere."

"Sure he wont speak?"

"Quite."

"All right. I was told he was to oppose us.
Who makes the counter motion?"

"Holland Rill; but the Friar will do for him."

"I think so. Who follows?"

"Duddingstone."

"We'll do. Give me the notes I left with you.
I see I must begin."

The learned gentleman then began a very powerfull and telling speech. He made several excellent points, and was ruffed in a manner which visibly dismayed the objectors. He traced the case from the beginning—showed that the design of the objectors was to secure the parish for that amiable, young, and vigorous individual, Mr Sneaker—that being disappointed in this object, by the presentation having been given to another, who laboured under the fatal

disqualification of being a married man, they had got up this opposition before he had even preached his trial discourses, and that they had done all in their power to prejudice the minds of the parishioners against him. "With all their endeavours, however," said the learned gentleman, "they were only able to get some forty or fifty of their own immediate dependants to sign the objections; while the call was subscribed by some five hundred parishioners. In fact, the people were so anxious to have the presentee as their minister, that they had voluntarily got up a subscription to enable the case to be brought before the Assembly." He then analyzed the objections, and the evidence adduced in support of them. He showed that the objectors had subscribed the document containing them without knowing what they had signed; that their evidence was merely an iteration of that of the Rev. Mr M'Cringer, of Mr Sneaker, and of Miss M'Corkscrew, who were examined at the outset, to give the cue to those who were to follow, who were utterly ignorant themselves, and mere tools in the hands of designing and unscrupulous men. "What, therefore," he asked, "was the value of that evidence? Did the parties who had been examined show that they went to hear the presentee with proper feelings, or did they comport themselves like Christians in the house of prayer?"

What were Miss M'Corkscrew and her lover, Mr Sneaker, doing? Why, they were laughing! So was that exemplary divine, the Rev. Alister M'Cringer, whose conduct throughout the whole of this case ought to be visited with the severest reprehension."

The learned counsel concluded a speech of considerable length, and of persuasive eloquence, by expressing his conviction that the Assembly would have no difficulty in sustaining the appeal of the presentee, and reversing the findings of the presbytery. At the conclusion of this address, there was long and continued ruffing, which was with some difficulty suppressed.

The counsel for the objectors was next heard. He evidently felt that he had not the sympathy of the Assembly with him. He endeavoured, however, to make the most of his case, but the work was not a labour of love. He attempted to follow his opponents over the ground they had traversed, and to refute their arguments, by reading copious extracts from the evidence, but he was listened to with marked impatience, and was frequently interrupted. After speaking for about an hour and a half, he was glad to sit down, expressing his belief that the Assembly would dismiss the appeal and sustain the deliverance of the inferior court.

The Rev. Mr M'Cringer now rose to defend the

judgment of the presbytery. He was received with unmistakable disapprobation. He had not proceeded far with his speech, when cries of "Cut it short!" were heard in the gallery. He went on, however, and seemed to be speaking with considerable vehemence, but a great part of what he said was not heard on account of the ruffing and ironical cheers.

The Rev. Havral Clash had turned his back, and was leaning his head upon his hand, absorbed in silent grief on account of the turn matters were taking. A wicked thought entered into Garrempey's head. He quietly stretched his arm behind M'Cringer's back, and gave his coat tail a pull on the side next to his reverend *confrère*. The effect was exactly what he had anticipated. M'Cringer turned round and whispered in his colleague's ear, "Just a few minutes longer." He did not wait to hear the moody "Eh?" of his sorrowing companion, but continued to speak with increased energy. In a few minutes afterwards, Garrempey gave another and stronger pull at the coat—"Only a few words more," said M'Cringer, inclining his head towards the same quarter. He resumed his observations amidst hisses, ruffing, and ironical cheers. At last Garrempey again stretched forth his arm, and gave a tug of such persuasive and effectual power as brought the rev.

orator to his seat, amidst laughter and ruffing from all quarters.

"I could do no more," said M'Cringer, addressing his forlorn coadjutor, in the full belief that he had given him the warning signals to stop his oration.

The counsel for the presentee did not consider it necessary to reply.

Parties were then removed, and the Assembly had the discussion all to themselves. Several members spoke before any motion was made. At last the Rev. Dr Holland Rill rose, and after a speech which was very unfavourably received, moved "That the Assembly dismiss the appeal for the presentee, sustain the deliverance of the presbytery of Dunderhead, refusing to proceed with his settlement in the parish of Veto, and that the clerk be instructed to intimate this deliverance to the patron."

This motion was duly seconded.—Enquiry was then made whether there was any counter-motion.

The Rev. Dr Greyfriar rose, amidst great cheering, and in a remarkable speech, which elicited frequent applause, went over the whole case, and concluded by moving "That the Assembly sustain the appeal, reverse the deliverance of the presbytery of Dunderhead, and remit to that body to proceed with the settlement of the presentee according to the law of the church."

The motion was seconded by Dr Peery.

Then that fiery and restless orator, the Rev. Dorsal Fin, who had frequently and rudely interrupted the previous speakers, rose, and in a slashing speech, combated the views of the mover of the second motion.

He was frequently interrupted by stinging remarks and observations from various members ; but, like the bull tormented by darts in the arena, he was rendered thereby only more furious and determined. Nature can, however, only hold out for a certain time, and at last this reverend Boanerges sunk into his seat exhausted.

The discussion was prolonged until three o'clock in the morning, amidst almost continual cries of "Divide, divide." At last the doors were shut, and the division began. The Assembly agreed to take the vote as for the first and second motion. Now hearts began to beat quickly, as member after member, in answer to their names, called out FIRST — SECOND. Thus did the division go on, until at length it became evident that SECOND would win the day. It was about four o'clock in the morning, yet nobody seemed tired, so great was the excitement. When the list had been gone over, and the clerk intimated that there was a majority of seventy-five for the second motion, a loud cheer rang through the hall—the presentee was in tears—

Huistan was blubbering for joy—Miss M'Corkscrew had fainted—and Sneaker, who was in the gallery, hid his face in his hat. Sheepshanks, Puncheon, Stirk, and Porter, looked at one another, but said nothing. M'Cringer and his fellow-commissioner hastily left their seats and slunk away as fast as they could. And so ended “THE OPPOSITION IN THE PARISH OF VETO.”

It was a strange sight to see the long pent-up crowd pouring down in all directions from the old town at such an unusual hour. Over the Mound, down the High Street, by every avenue, in short, through which they could get egress, rushed along, old and young—sedate gentlemen in full-dress costume, flanked by bodies of laughing beaux and chattering belles. A stranger would have fancied that some ball, upon an unusually grand scale, had just broken up. The moon shone beautifully over bastion and tower of the old Castle, glinting in silvery beams through the leafy branches of the trees beneath. It was a lovely morning. Nature was in a mood delightfully calm and serene. The stars were beginning to retire before the approach of morn, and while the busy human throng which swept past were intent upon seeking repose, the little warblers of the neighbouring gardens were just leaving their nests to greet the dawning day. There were sad as well as

joyous hearts among that crowd. Poor Miss M'Cork-screw saw her hopes extinguished. She now knew that her lover had proved faithless, for she had been informed of what Poind had told Mr Puncheon. Mr Ochtertyre thanked heaven for his success. He had triumphed over persecution and slander. His wife and little ones, for whom he had fought, would now rejoice and reap the benefit of increased worldly prosperity. Huistan went capering about like a frolicsome elephant, most anxiously looking to catch a glimpse of Sheepshanks and Stirk, whom he particularly detested. These individuals, however, had disappeared, and Huistan saw their faces in Auld Reekie no more. Sneaker wandered he hardly knew where. What his thoughts were it is needless to say. He had seen Miss M'Corkscrew faint in the arms of her cousin, and did not feel very comfortable in reflecting upon his conduct. One thing, however, pre-occupied his mind—he had heard that Mrs M'Creesh was in Edinburgh.

“What can she be doing here?” he asked himself.

Before he could form anything like a probable answer to this question, he found himself at the door of the lodgings taken by Dr Creed previous to starting for Perthshire, and in which he was to await their return. They arrived that morning in time for breakfast.

"So you have lost your case, it seems?" said the doctor.

"The presentee has won," said Sneaker, gloomily.
"I expected as much."

"Were the speeches good?"

"The counsel for the presentee spoke very well; but the counsel for the objectors did not make so much of the case as we expected."

"Indeed. Hallo!" said the doctor, opening his eyes and rubbing his nose. "What's this? Why, I declare! Really I can't believe my eyes!"

"What is it, my dear?" said Mrs Creed!

"Well, who would have thought it," said the doctor, laying down a newspaper which he had just been reading.

"What is it?" said Mrs Creed again, with intense curiosity depicted on her countenance.

"Listen," said the doctor. "At 24 Queen Street, Edinburgh, on the — inst., by the Rev. Roderick M'Rory, Jeremiah Leek, Esq., nurseryman and seedsman, Crossmungo, to Euphema Dougal, relict of Hugh M'Creesh, Esq., soap and tallow merchant, Glasgow. No cards."

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed Mrs Creed, "it's her gardener!"

Sneaker groaned, and rising, hurriedly left the room.

"This will be a dreadful blow to poor Adam!" said Mrs Creed.

"So it will," replied the doctor.

"Well, well," observed Mrs Creed, "I really thought she had made up her mind to have him, after what she said to me. She has acted very deceitfully. It's all over the city that they were to be married this month. I can't understand it."

Mrs M'Creesh was one of those women who, to use a common expression, saw through a mill-stone as far as most people. She was not ignorant of the motives which produced the devoted attentions of Messrs Sneaker and Poind, and she had a malicious satisfaction in leading them as far on the ice as humoured her own caprice. She had, no doubt, been thinking of matrimony—having felt the want of a suitable companion; but neither of the two aspirants to her hand and fortune was the sort of man she thought of having. She wanted one approaching, as nearly as possible, to the lamented partner she had lost, and the mantle of the departed M'Creesh seemed to have fallen upon the shoulders of her gardener.

She sought no genteel connections. Jeremiah Leek was considerably her junior, it is true. He was a good-looking man; but what was of more consequence in the eyes of the widow, he was steady, sober, and honest, and possessed strong religious

feelings. He fulfilled, in her opinion, the Scripture injunction—"Not slothful in business; but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." He had been with her for several years, and by his shrewdness and intelligence, gradually raised himself in her estimation. Latterly he had taken charge of her whole property, and collected her rents and feu duties. In short, she had elevated him to the position of a land steward, or factor. To put an end to further importunities by her new admirers, she resolved to take a step which she had been meditating for some time before—she popped the question to the gardener, was duly accepted, and, after being "cried ance," as she said, "in the kirk o' Crossmungo," whilst her friends were all in Edinburgh, the loving pair found their way to the capital, where they were united in the holy bonds of matrimony by a second cousin of the happy bride-groom.

Poind took the earliest opportunity, after the case was over, of calling at the address given to him by Mr Puncheon, and asking if Mrs M'Creesh were at home. The servant, who came to the door, stared in his face. "There's no Mrs M'Creesh here, sir!"

"I can't be mistaken," said Poind; "I got the address from a gentleman, to whom she gave it herself."

“Oh! that must have been before she got married.”

“Married!” said Poind, in amazement.

“Yes, married,” said the girl. “She’s now Mrs Jeremiah Leek. She left here the other day for Glasgow.”

Poor Poind looked bewildered.

“Well, well!” he ejaculated at last, “I’m glad she hasn’t married that fellow Sneaker, at any rate.”

Our narrative now draws near its close. We have merely to say that, in the course of time, Miss M‘Corkscrew, like a good many other love-sick damsels, got over her grief, and was married to a worthy sheep-farmer; and that Mrs Jeremiah Leek, who was really fond of her niece, gave her a *tocher* of five thousand pounds on her marriage day, irrespective of the liferent provision already settled upon her. Miss M‘Phillabeg and Mr Porter were also united on the same occasion. Although Mrs M‘Corkscrew was obliged to vacate the manse, she found a comfortable asylum in the house of her son-in-law, and had the pleasure of seeing several rosy grand-children, striving for precedence on her knee. Mr Ochtertyre was duly inducted into the church, and took quiet possession of his manse and glebe. As for Sneaker, he got morose and sullen. He became disgusted with himself and every body else, and, as a necessary consequence, other people got

disgusted with him. He ceased to be an attraction in Glasgow society as rapidly as he had become so, and emigrated to New Zealand, with the view, probably, of converting the Hau Haus from Pai Marirism, and persuading them to abstain from pickled Missionary. When last heard of, he was at the Hokatiki diggings with a swag upon his back, preparing to go upon a prospecting expedition. He preached occasionally to the diggers when their cash was short and their spirits were low, at which time only they are in a mood to listen to anything so serious as a sermon, but he took kindly to the pick and shovel, and seemed to be living a jolly life.

Mr Garrempey still follows the profession of the law in Auld Reekie, but he has pretty often sundry misgivings that a great and momentous change is impending, which will overturn the old-fashioned state of things in that profession. He has strong hopes, however, that the Royal Commission which was obtained by Lord Westbury, to inquire into the state of the Judicature in Scotland, but the members of which have been appointed by the Tories, will be able, by a judicious selection and examination of witnesses, to show that the monopolies and privileges of metropolitan lawyers should remain intact. The select and unprejudiced body of men who compose the majority of that Commission are

presently engaged in taking evidence in Edinburgh with a secrecy and *méfiance* of publicity which could hardly have been surpassed by a *camera stellata*. So far, however, as it is possible to learn anything of their doings, it is not improbable that our friend Gabby will mix up an extra tumbler, and quaff it off with additional relish, after reading over the report with which they are pretty sure to close their laborious and eminently clandestine proceedings.

Huistan M'Huistan still continues his vocation of landlord of the "Inns" at Porterbier, and is always ready and willing to entertain men and horses on moderate terms, as well as to recount the Veto Case to any of his guests who may choose to seek his company over a bowl of punch.

As to Poind, we believe he still lives a life of single blessedness, but vows to have nothing more to do with such cases as **The Opposition in the Parish of Veto.**

¶ For "Scotorum," on page 267, read "Scotorum."



